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No. 21. *Published
Every Week.*

M. J. IVERS & CO., Publishers,
(James Sullivan, Proprietor.)
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Vol. II.

YELLOW HAIR, THE BOY CHIEF of the PAWNEES *The Adventurous Career of Eddie Burgess of Nebraska.*

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM.



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DIME

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BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM.



"THE BIG THUNDER IS MY FATHER, BUT MY ARROW SHALL SEEK HIS HEART IF HE HARMS MY PALE-FACE BROTHER."

Yellow Hair,

The Boy Chief of the Pawnees.

The Adventurous Career of Eddie Burgess of Nebraska.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,

AUTHOR OF "ADVENTURES OF BUFFALO BILL," "ADVENTURES OF WILD BILL,"
"TEXAS JACK," "BRUIN ADAMS,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE MIDNIGHT MASSACRE.

THE earliest recollection of Eddie Burgess—to-day a handsome, golden-haired, daring-faced youth of twenty—was of rolling, flower-bespangled prairies, wild ponies and red-skins, if I except the home influence of kind parents, a happy household, and loving brothers and sisters, with which the boy was surrounded.

But away from the homestead and its pleasant family circle, to the plains, mountains, and untutored red-skins, went the thoughts of the boy, as soon as he was old enough to walk well, and his adventurous disposition and love of the romantic caused him to long to become a famous scout or Indian-fighter, or at least a dweller in the pathless wilds of the West.

Sooner, far sooner than he ever dreamt of, it fell to the lot of Eddie Burgess to leave that happy home and have to face the bitterest ordeals of a cruel fate, which well-nigh drove out of his heart any hope for the future.

For the red-skin boy, born on the prairie to a wild life, the rough existence of hardships and danger he was forced to lead was what he loved; but to the pale-face youth, born amid other scenes, and nurtured by loving hears, it was a severe life to lead when forced to become as the very Indian himself, and feel all the while that he had a cruel master, and dwelt among foes.

When in his eighth year Eddie Burgess first felt the venom in the Indian nature, and what it was to sorrow and suffer.

He had, in the western home of his parents, seen brave men go forth to fight the red-skin marauders, and had heard thrilling tales of Indian treachery and cruelties, and had often seen the wandering children of the plains when they came near where he dwelt; but the horrors of a red war he had been spared, as well as the blood-curdling war-whoop and sickening scenes that follow on the trail of

the war-path, until it fell to his lot to witness that of which he had only heard.

He had gone with his brother Charlie, a few years his senior, to the border home of a friend of his father, to pass a few weeks.

The boys had looked forward to the visit with glowing anticipations, for they knew that Mr. Babbitt, the settler, lived on the very border that divided the roving tribes from the settlements, and his son had told of many an adventure with the Indians.

Mounted upon their wiry, swift ponies, and armed with shot-guns, a pistol and hunting-knife each, the boys set out alone for their trip, which was a ride of eighty miles.

Never in their lives did they feel prouder than when camping alone the first night out, and they made for themselves a wicky-up* and often in after years recalled the comforts of that little camp.

The next afternoon they arrived at their destination, and were warmly welcomed by the family, and especially Bob Babbitt, a boy of thirteen, whose visit they were returning, he having passed a month at their house.

The first remark of Mr. Babbitt was one calculated to give anxiety to older heads, though Eddie and Charlie built from it castles in air of stirring scenes and adventures to follow, for he had said:

"Well, boys, when I asked your father to let you visit us, I little thought we were going to have trouble with the Indians; but runners are out through the settlements now, warning all that the red-skins are on the war-path."

"Then we can help you defend your home, sir," said Charlie, and the boys were delighted at the prospect of trouble, while older faces looked anxious.

But what the boys looked forward to as a thrilling adventure turned out, alas! to be a red horror, and far sooner than any one had anticipated; for, hardly had the household, after an evening of pleasure in the society of their young guests, retired for the night, when dark forms flitted from tree to tree and stealthily approached the commodious cabin.

Not a soul was awake, not an eye saw their coming, for, though danger was threatened, it was not expected for days, perhaps weeks.

A hundred dark forms, with faces hideously painted, crept like panthers through the timber and surrounded the cabin and out-buildings, their presence not even awakening the huge watch-dog that lay upon the back porch little dreaming of danger.

But, as a warrior placed his moccasined foot upon the step, the dog sprang to his feet

* A shelter of brush, bark, etc.

with a loud, furious bark, to drop dead from an arrow sent through and through his heart.

But the deep bay and dying yelp of poor Watch had aroused Mr. Babbitt, and a light flashed within, and the settler called out:

"Ho, Watch! What is it, dog?"

No sound answered, and Mr. Babbitt asked:

"Is there any one there who seeks shelter?"

He was, like all settlers, most hospitable, and thought that some benighted neighbor whom Watch knew, as he barked no more, might be without, for he had distinctly heard a human voice.

"Ay, ay, neighbor Babbitt, I would like shelter for man and beast till morn," said a deep voice in reply.

Not seeing that the one who spoke had his face covered with war-paint, and was a renegade white, chief of an Indian tribe, Mr. Babbitt opened the door as he said:

"You shall have shelter and food, neighbor, with pleasure."

As he stepped half-dressed out of the door there came a flash, report and cry mingled together, and then across the body of his victim sprang the Renegade Chief, followed by a score of his red warriors.

Then was heard loud shrieks from Mrs. Babbitt and her daughters, and out of their rooms dashed Charlie and Eddie Burgess, followed by young Babbitt.

Several shots followed, then terrific war-cries, a fierce struggle, and then silence ensued, for there were none to resist the red demons in their work of massacre.

CHAPTER II.

FIGHTING FOR HIS SCALP.

How long Eddie Burgess lay unconscious, for he had been felled by a tomahawk blow on the side of his head, he did not know; but he recovered sensibility to find himself lying on the floor of the sitting-room, where he had fallen, and the blood trickling down his face from the gash over his forehead.

Near him lay Mrs. Babbitt, and one look was sufficient to show that she was dead, and had been scalped, while her eldest daughter was visible, lying across the threshold, and she too had been killed, and the Indian trophy, a long lock of hair, torn away.

It was a sickening scene for the poor boy to gaze upon and he shut his eyes momentarily with horror.

He remembered that young Babbitt, his brother and himself, had boldly rushed out and attacked the red-skins, and then he received the blow on his head and knew no more.

His brother and friend were no where

visible, but he felt sure that they had been killed, and the tears came in his dark blue eyes at their sad fate.

What had saved his scalp he discovered by the sounds without, for there was a fight going on, and he knew that the Indians had been attacked by soldiers or settlers before their red work had been completed.

But, as he listened, he heard triumphant war-cries, and then he knew, as the sounds of battle came from further and further away, that the Indians were driving their white foes.

He staggered to his feet, but fell again, unable to stand, and it was some moments before he regained strength.

Then he heard the clamor of the Indians returning, and he looked at the pistol that lay by his side, and grasped his knife, determined to die game, for he had no hope, and there was that in the brave boy's nature that would not allow him to beg uselessly for his life.

To his joy he found his little repeater had three loads in it, and, young as he was, Eddie was a good shot.

The revolver had been presented to him by Buffalo Bill, who one night stopped at his father's house, while scouting, and took a fancy to the boy, and Eddie prized the weapon beyond all his treasures, for it had on it the name of the famous Indian-fighter and scout.

"Buffalo Bill wouldn't miss them, and I won't either," said Eddie grimly, as he sat upon the floor, for he was afraid to trust himself to stand, and half shielded himself with the dead body of Mrs. Babbitt.

Louder grew the exultant voices without, broken now and then by a wild war-cry, and then in through the open door came a dozen forms, with hideously painted faces.

They started back at the picture that met their gaze, for there sat the boy, his revolver leveled, and the body of Mrs. Babbitt shielding him.

Eddie was the first to break the tableau, and a shot did it, and down dropped an Indian.

Then, with a yell, they rushed upon him, and twice more the weapon flashed, the bullets breaking the arm of one and grazing the shoulder of another, for the boy was determined to fight bravely for his scalp.

Another moment and the long, curling, golden hair of Eddie Burgess would have hung at the belt of a huge warrior, when, just as the hand was thrust out to seize it, it was grasped, and a stern voice cried:

"Let this boy live, for he is too brave to die."

"I will take him."

The speaker had spoken in the Sioux tongue, enough of which Eddie had picked up to understand him, and it was the white renegade chief that had saved his life.

Turning to another brave the chief ordered him to bind the boy securely on a mustang, but not to injure him, and then the work of plunder went on, all of which poor Eddie gazed upon until every idea of romance regarding the Indians died out forever in his young heart.

His brave defense had saved his life and scalp, but what horrors were before him as the red-skins' captive he little dreamed of.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOY CAPTIVES.

THE captors of Eddie Burgess took him with them in their long raid of warfare against the white settlers on the border, and he was in their battles, bound to the back of a mustang, in their rapid rides, short encampments, and at last their retreat before the advance of a large body of soldiery.

There was a whole tribe on the war-path, and the warriors were divided into different bands, the larger one being under the command of the white renegade chief, who was known among the braves as White Snake.

This band seemed to have done the most harm, and, loaded down with plunder, they at last were forced to retreat to save their spoils.

They carried back with them but one captive, Eddie Burgess, and what the fate of his brother Charlie had been the boy did not know, and every night he shed bitter tears of sorrow when thinking of him, and his thoughts would fly back to the home he had left with such joyous hopes of adventure and pleasure to be his lot.

He had seen the dead bodies of all of the Babbitt family, for they had been left in the cabin when the red fiends set it on fire; but nowhere had he seen Charlie's body, and knowing how shrewd and brave his elder brother was, he held some hope that he had escaped the massacre.

Fighting as they retreated, the Indians found their way back to their stronghold village in the mountains, and Eddie's hope faded each day as he saw the impossibility of escape.

At night he was bound securely and slept near the White Snake, and by day his feet were tied under a mustang, the lariat of which was held by an Indian.

He was given all the food he wanted, and not treated unkindly; but the thongs cut into his flesh, and he suffered greatly, and his heart was full of sorrow.

At last, after a desperate battle, in which the Indians were victorious, beating the

troops back, they reached the mountains, and Eddie saw the village before him.

It was a large village, numbering a thousand lodges, and the lands around it were covered with horses and cattle, for the other marauding bands had returned, and the Indians were wild with delight at their success.

The women shrieked forth a welcome, the children shouted, the dogs barked, and the exultant braves uttered piercing cries of triumph, until the count of the dead began, and then were heard wailing and lamentations upon all sides.

To his joy Eddie, awe-stricken at the scenes before him, suddenly spied a well-known face and form.

"Charlie!"

He shouted forth the name, and instantly his brother turned toward him.

"Eddie!"

It was all the two captive boys could say for some time, and then Charlie told how he had escaped, by going down the cellar steps and then out into the timber, and was on his way home, believing that all had been killed at the Babbitts', when he lay down in a thicket to sleep, for he was utterly worn out.

He was awakened by a voice and found himself in the presence of half a hundred warriors, another band of the Sioux, and he had been carried by them upon their raid, and then brought to the village.

"But, Eddie, I belong to a chief of another tribe, who joined the White Snake band for the raid, and he is to take me to his village, many miles from here," said Charlie sadly.

"I will ask the White Snake to keep you too, Charlie, and together we can escape," and Eddie called to the renegade, who was near, and begged him to let his brother remain with him.

The white man, with his stern, cruel face, still bedaubed with paint, turned toward the boys and asked, addressing Eddie:

"Is that your brother?"

"He is."

"What is your name?"

"Eddie Burgess."

"You are no relations of Babbitt are you?"

"No, sir; we went to visit Mr. Babbitt's son, and that night you attacked the house."

"Well, I owe it to Alex Babbitt that I am what I now am, for he caught me in a little wickedness once, would not spare me, and I was sent to prison for ten years."

"I remained seven of those years, boys, and then got away by killing a keeper, and I came here and went from bad to worse, but I have had my revenge on Alex Babbitt and all his family, and I would not have spared

you, brave as was your fight, had I believed you any of his gang.

"Well, my son, whose captive are you?" and he turned to Charlie.

"Red Buffalo they call the chief," said Charlie.

"He does not belong to my village, but I will see if I can buy you from him, though, if you have the pluck of your little brother, I guess I'll have more than I can attend to to watch the pair of you.

"I'll make an offer for you, anyhow."

He sent for Red Buffalo, and said:

"The White Snake wishes to buy the boy captive of the Red Buffalo."

"No," was the answer.

"Will give him a pony."

"No."

"And a red blanket?"

"No."

"Two ponies?"

The Red Buffalo shook his head.

"Three ponies, a red blanket and a gun?"

"No, the Red Buffalo wants the pale-face boy to train him up to make great warrior."

"It is useless, boys, for he will have his way," said White Snake, and he walked away, and then, seeing Eddie, the Red Buffalo called to him:

"Will give the White Snake same offer for his pale-face pappoose?"

"No, sir."

"The Red Buffalo has open hand, and will give so many ponies," and he indicated the number by counting five of his fingers.

"The Red Buffalo hasn't got ponies enough to buy that boy," said the renegade, and he went on his way, while the Indian chief, disappointed and angry, took hold of Charlie and dragged him away, and poor Eddie saw him ride out of the village shortly after by the side of his captor.

He waved his hand to his brother, but Charlie was securely bound, and could only nod his head in farewell, and Eddie threw himself upon the ground and shed bitter, scalding tears of sorrow.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GANTLET OF THE RAPIDS.

WHEN the scalp-dances and wailing were over in the Indian village, and affairs had settled down once more to everyday life, Eddie was released of his bonds by White Snake, who said to him:

"Boy, I am going to give you the freedom of the village now, and you can enjoy yourself with the little Indians after you have looked to my comfort, for I have duties for you to perform each day.

"But mind you, if you attempt to escape, and I catch you, I'll kill you as I would a

dog; but be a good boy, and obey me, and I'll treat you well."

Eddie was too glad to get his freedom to think of anything else, and calling some of the younger sons of the chiefs, White Snake told them to make a companion of the lonely white boy.

This they at once set about doing in their own way, and after Eddie had whipped every boy of his size, and some even older and larger, in the village, they became most friendly with him.

They taught him how to make bows and arrows, and he soon excelled them in true shooting.

They taught him to make fishing lines, traps to ensnare birds, and all kinds of work on buckskin, until in a few months the pupil excelled the teachers.

Young as he was Eddie soon grew less sorrowful at his lot, though he never for a moment forgot the loved ones at home, who he knew were bitterly grieving for him, or his brother Charlie, who was leading the same life in another camp, or perhaps he had been killed, Eddie thought.

The duties of the captive boy consisted in rubbing up the weapons of White Snake and keeping the tepee in order, for the renegade lived alone, not having been won by any of the red maidens who sought to gain his love.

Eddie's bed consisted of a bear robe, and his covering was a red blanket, his pillow being made from fox skins, which he had himself tanned, having insured the foxes in a trap.

White Snake treated the boy kindly, though he was a man of few words, and taught him all he could of Indian craft and how to trail a foe.

But he loved rude sports, and was wont to often wager with some chief that his boy captive could whip certain youngsters in the village, and a pitched battle was sure to follow, in which Eddie invariably came off the victor, though often with a black eye, scarred face or bloody nose.

His form was slender and wiry, and soon grew as hard as iron, from his constant exercise, and he gloried in the triumphs he won, and worked the harder to inure himself to hardships, and face any danger that he might one day bring his powers and pluck to use in making his escape, for, in spite of his seeming contentment in his lot, and forgetfulness of home, that one idea was uppermost in his mind.

One day the daughter of the great medicine chief of the village was out upon the river in her canoe.

She was a young girl of seventeen, and it was said she inherited her beauty from her

mother, who had been a white captive, until she died of a broken heart.

She was the prettiest maiden of the village, the very idol of her father, and had always been kind to Eddie when he crossed her path.

Upon the afternoon she was out upon the river she was engaged in fishing, and, in her struggle with a large bass, dropped her overboard.

Excited by her efforts to capture the fish, she did not attempt to regain her paddle, and was only warned of her danger, as she drew the bass into the canoe, by the shouts of her companions on the shore.

To her horror she saw that she had drifted down with the stream, until she was dangerously near to the rapids, and her canoe was already going faster and faster as it approached the swifter current.

Almost any other maiden of the village could have sprung overboard and made for the shore; but she could not swim a stroke, her father having kept her out of the river for fear of some accident befalling her.

She turned her gaze anxiously toward her comrades, but not one could aid her, and even those in their canoes dared not venture into the swift current.

The village was half a mile away and no warrior was near, and the frightened girl sunk down in the bottom of her canoe and began to chant her death-song.

Just then there was heard a splash down the stream, and a shout arose from a hundred red-skin children as one of their number had boldly sprung into the stream and was swimming swiftly out to head off the canoe and its alarmed inmate.

Cutting his way through the waters the small but gallant rescuer swam with a vigor that was remarkable, and all breathlessly watched his progress.

Behind him, fastened to a string held in his teeth, was a paddle, and the boy seemed determined to accomplish his purpose.

Down the river came the canoe, each moment gaining increased rapidity, and to head it off at a given point the young swimmer devoted every energy.

From the village, alarmed by the cries, warriors came running toward the river with the speed of deer, and behind them came squaws and children, but all saw that they could be of no aid, though they pressed on to the scene.

Suddenly a great shout arose from a hundred juvenile throats, for the boy had gained the path the canoe must take, and the next instant grasped it.

The shock half dragged him from the water; but he held on with wonderful ten-

acity, and a moment after pulled himself up over the stern.

For a moment the light canoe danced and swayed fearfully, as though it would go down; but the boy told the Indian girl to sit flat down, and then taking his place in the stern he seized his paddle and worked desperately.

But no man's arms could keep back the canoe from the rapids then, and seeing that his efforts were fruitless, the boy set himself to the task of trying to run the gantlet of the rapids.

Several times, in company with Indian warriors, he had gone down the dangerous stream, but never alone, or with every effort to save life depending upon him.

But he did not flinch from the danger, and, with his paddle grasped firmly in his hand kept his eyes fixed upon the rocks and foaming torrent ahead, while the gaze of the girl was upon him in mute supplication and admiration.

Upon the shore half a thousand eyes were upon him, and in breathless silence all watched, saw the canoe rush like a race horse toward the first danger, and then sheer from it under the guidance of the paddle.

Then another danger was passed, and another, until at last the rapids were run, and the canoe paddled inshore where the old and the young of the village met its occupants, and a shout went up from the throats of stern braves in honor of Yellow Hair, the pale-face boy, as Eddie Burgess was called by the Indians, for he it was who had saved the life of the daughter of the Medicine Chief at the risk of his own.

"My brave boy, you'll wear the bear-claw necklace and eagle-feathers* long before you are out of your teens," said the renegade chief to Eddie after his daring adventure.

CHAPTER V.

AN INDIAN BOY PARD.

THE chum, particular friend, or rather, in border parlance, red-skin boy pard of Eddie Burgess, was a youth two years his senior, and the son of the chief second in rank to the White Snake.

Eddie had had several pitched battles with Little Thunder, as the boy was called, when he first came to the village, and had proved the master of the red-skin lad, who had acknowledged it by at once adopting the young captive as his brother.

If any one imposed upon Yellow Hair, he had Little Thunder to fight, and so it was with Eddie if his red pard was maltreated.

* Emblems of a chief's rank.

Thus they became inseparable companions, and though the senior of Yellow Hair, and larger, as I have said, the red-skin was ruled by the pale-face.

The father of Little Thunder was the most savage chief in the tribe, had no mercy in his heart for any foe, and often looked at Eddie's long golden hair as though a scalp-lock from it would be most becoming to his belt.

Already hanging there were a dozen scalp-locks of pale-faces, one of which Eddie was wont to gaze on with horror, for he knew it to be the hair of poor Mrs. Babbitt, and he hated the old chief, though he felt such a friendly regard for his son.

The greater the warmth of friendship between Yellow Hair and Little Thunder, the more the father of the latter seemed to hate the pale-face boy, until Eddie soon saw that whenever he gazed upon him he looked as though he longed to kill him, and he determined to keep out of Big Thunder's way as much as possible, for he began to really fear him.

One day Yellow Hair went in search of several ponies belonging to White Snake that had strayed from the herd, and not being able to find Little Thunder, and caring not for other company, he was forced to go alone.

As he now could go where he pleased, he determined to take advantage of one of these hunts for stray ponies to escape; but on this occasion he was not able to make the attempt, and wished to wait until all the fighting warriors had gone out of the village on some raid.

After a long tramp he found the ponies, lariat one and was about to mount and drive the others back to the village, when he was seized from behind and hurled upon the ground with a force that nearly knocked the breath out of him.

Alarmed, he glanced upward, at the same time trying to draw an arrow to fit to his bow to defend himself, when he beheld who his assailant was.

It was Big Thunder, and he held the boy down with his foot upon his breast, while his face gleamed with savage hate.

"The great chief Big Thunder will not hurt the pale-face boy," cried Eddie.

"Yes."

"The Yellow Hair has not harmed him."

"The Big Thunder hates all pale-faces," was the savage reply.

"But the Yellow Hair has given up his people and become a red-skin."

"The Yellow Hair is like a bird.

"He sings merrily in his cage, but will fly away when his wings are no longer clipped."

"But the Yellow Hair is the brother of the great chief's son."

"The Little Thunder is a fool to have a pale-face brother," hissed the chief.

Eddie made no reply, and the chief drew his scalping knife and said gloatingly:

"The Big Thunder will wear the scalp of the serpent pale-face boy."

Eddie knew that the Indian meant every word he said.

He could not offer the slightest resistance, and who was near to aid him?

He loved life, and he did not wish to die, and he pleaded:

"Will not the Big Thunder spare the Yellow Hair?"

"No."

"The White Snake will be very angry."

"The White Snake will not know," was the malicious reply.

"He will hunt for the Yellow Hair."

"He will not know that Big Thunder took his scalp."

Eddie now felt that he must die, and he had lived long enough among the Indians to meet death with stoicism and seeming indifference, and seeing that he could do nothing else, he said boldly:

"Then let the coward chief strike, for the Yellow Hair is brave."

"The Big Thunder is no coward."

"He kills a boy; he is a squaw brave."

"The Yellow Hair shall die," shouted the enraged Indian, and he bent over to seize the long hair and first drag off the scalp and then kill the helpless boy.

"The Yellow Hair shall not die."

Both started at the words, and beheld standing near them, his arrow set and bow-string drawn back, and aimed at Big Thunder's heart, none other than Little Thunder himself.

The chief was astounded, and uttered no word, and Eddie Burgess gazed in surprise and awe at his red pard, who said boldly:

"The Big Thunder is my father, but my arrow shall seek his heart if he harms my pale-face brother."

It was a thrilling, strange tableau, and the moment it lasted seemed hours to those three who participated in it.

What would Big Thunder do?

Thus thought Eddie.

Will Little Thunder keep his word?

This thought also passed through the boy's mind, and he almost forgot himself in watching the father and son.

At last Big Thunder spoke, and his voice trembled, and he removed his moccasined foot from Eddie's heart.

"The Little Thunder has the courage of a mountain lion, to thus face his father; but he has saved the life of his pale-face brother, and the Big Thunder buries the hatchet of

hatred and bids the Yellow Hair welcome to his tepee."

It was with a joyous heart Eddie sprung to his feet and grasped the hand of his red-skin boy pard, while the chief, with stern mien and downcast head, strode away from the spot, leaving the boys together.

CHAPTER VI.

A BEAR'S NEST.

THOUGH Big Thunder disdained to ask either his son or Eddie to keep the affair secret, of his effort to kill the latter, and his being thwarted by Little Thunder, he still felt extremely anxious about the matter, for he knew that not only White Snake, but also the other chiefs would hold him to strict accountability for his treachery, and his life might be the forfeit.

He however breathed freely when several days passed away and he found that Yellow Hair had kept the secret as religiously as had his own son.

Then his hatred for the boy utterly faded away, and in its place came a strong friendship, and he made up his mind to befriend him with his life should occasion ever offer, and this determination was the further increased some weeks after from a circumstance which occurred, and that served to make the young pale-face still more of a hero in the eyes of the Indians.

It seems that Little Thunder one day, contrary to his usual custom, went alone on a hunt, with the avowed determination to take a step up the ladder of fame by killing a bear unaided.

He had taken his father's rifle and his own knife, together with a bow and quiver of arrows, and, mounting his mustang, sallied forth on the war-path against Bruin.

Hearing of where his red pard had gone, and anxious about him, Yellow Hair sprung upon his pony and started upon his trail, following it as readily as a hound would run on the scent of a deer.

He rode rapidly and knew that Little Thunder could not be far ahead of him, so was about to give a ringing halloo, when a shot was fired near by, followed by a savage growl.

Instantly he darted forward like the wind, and came upon a stirring scene.

There stood Little Thunder, and in the greatest peril.

He had gotten down from his mustang and gone into a narrow ravine between the rocks, where was visible the entrance to a cave.

That a bear dwelt there the Indian boy felt certain; but he found more than he bargained for.

He had hardly approached the cave when the scratching sound of claws upon the rock

caused him to turn, and he beheld two large bears coming at a swift trot toward him.

To scale the precipitous walls of rock upon either side of him, and behind him, was impossible, and his only way of retreat was to run into the cave.

But in the mouth of the cavern now stood two good-sized cubs, gazing upon the intruder and snarling savagely.

Yet, in all his danger, the Indian boy did not lose his presence of mind, but, with his rifle leaning against him, sent arrows at his four footed foes with marvelous rapidity and good aim, though the wounds but added to their fury, and hardly checked their advance.

As they came nearer he took up his rifle, and, after a steady aim, fired, and over rolled one of the bears.

This was the shot heard by Yellow Hair, and he arrived upon the scene just as the second bear raised upon his hind legs to grapple with the brave boy, who, with his knife only to defend himself, had determined to die like the great warrior he hoped to become.

Eddie Burgess saw the deadly danger of his red pard, and that not an instant was to be lost, and he reined up his pony, slipped to the ground, and with his rifle resting upon a rock, for it was too heavy for him to hold out and be sure of his aim, he ran his eyes along the sights and fired.

The bullet dropped the bear to the ground, and with a mighty leap Little Thunder sprung over him and flew down the canyon, for he knew that Bruin was by no means dead.

Meeting Yellow Hair coming on at a run, his bow and arrows in hand, he turned, and with the rapidity of thought, almost, watched his pale-face pard send the darts into the hairy hide of the monster, that had struggled to his feet, until he succumbed to his wounds and rolled over dead.

It was a proud day for the boy pards, and to secure the two cubs was their next work, and this they did after receiving several bites and scratches which they hardly felt in the glory of their victory.

The cubs were tied, muzzled and thrown across the back of one of the ponies, and, mounting the other, the boys set forth on their return to the village, where their story was told and the two larger bears at once sent for and their claws given to the youthful victors, while, knowing that his son owed his life to Yellow Hair, Big Thunder treated the boy with a respect he did not even show to the Medicine Chief.

CHAPTER VII.

BIG THUNDER ATTEMPTS TO PAY A DEBT.

THAT Eddie Burgess, in spite of his pale

face, had become a universal favorite with the Indians, was evident, and he was generally regarded with as friendly a feeling as though he were in reality one of their own people.

The White Snake had come to them not as a captive, but, when forced to fly from his own race, he had watched his chance to go to the red-skins with an *éclat* that would serve him well, and knowing of an intended secret expedition against their village, he had gone and warned them of their danger, plotted an ambush against the soldiers, and, when they fell into it, had fought with a ferocity that won the admiration of the Indians and made him a chief.

His bold raid he planned and led against a settlement was also successful, and the capture of a wagon-train of stores added to his laurels and power and gave him the position of lead chief by the unanimous consent of the leading warriors of the tribe.

But the Indians feared the stern, silent man, and not one of them felt friendship for him, though they respected and admired him as a great chieftain, and felt safe under his leadership.

They had frowned down his adoption of a pale-face boy; but those who openly had shown a dislike to it, had been quickly made to feel the power of the White Snake, and thus it was that the presence of Eddie Burgess was at first tolerated, while the boy himself won the friendship of his red foes, for foes they now were to him, as he had not forgotten that fearful midnight massacre, and that loving parents and sisters were then mourning him as dead.

Shortly after the bear adventure Big Thunder sought out Yellow Hair, and invited him to go on a hunt with him.

This was an honor that the boy was glad to accept, for he had long before given up all idea of further treachery and murderous intent on the part of the chief toward him.

Though a man as cruel as a snake to all foes, Big Thunder had a heart in his red breast, which was proven by his devoted love to his son.

Loving Little Thunder as he did, it set the chief to thinking, and his thoughts ran in a strange channel for one of his stern nature.

Suppose that Little Thunder, he thought, should be a captive to the pale-faces, how bitterly would he mourn for him, and how glad would he be did some kind friend set him free.

Thus feeling, and owing to Yellow Hair friendship for keeping the secret of his treachery toward him, and gratitude of the deepest kind for saving his son from death, he asked the boy to go hunting with him that he might aid him in his escape.

To Eddie's surprise the Indian chief took the trail leading toward the settlements.

There was good hunting there, he knew, for buffalo, elk, antelope and bear abounded; but then it was a most dangerous locality for an Indian to venture into, especially Big Thunder, who was hated and dreaded by the whites.

But as to his reason for going in that direction the chief remained silent until the sunset of the second day, when they halted on a high hill on the banks of a river.

"Does the Yellow Hair see yonder smoke?" asked the chief, pointing to a blue column of vapor miles distant.

"Yes."

"It comes from the log tepee of a pale-face."

"Yes."

"Is not the heart of the Yellow Hair glad?"

"Why should it be?"

"To see the smoke made by his people?"

"The people of the Yellow Hair are far away, and he has lived so long with the Sioux, their home is as his home," was the reply, while a strange look came upon the boy's face, which the Indian, with all his cunning and knowledge of human nature could not fathom.

Big Thunder was astounded, for he had expected to see the boy dance with delight.

Had he mistaken him?

Did he love the red-skins more than his own people?

Did he not wish to escape when the log-cabin of a settler was almost in view?

"Does the Yellow Hair prefer to live with his red brothers?" asked the chief, after a pause.

"The Yellow Hair has good friends among the red people," was the reply.

"Yes, and the Big Thunder will speak straight; he will tell the Yellow Hair that he wished to be his friend, and brought him here to set him free, and let him go to his people, while he went back and told the White Snake a crooked story of how the pale-face boy had gotten away from him in the night."

"The Yellow Hair thanks the Big Thunder; but he will return to the tepees of the Sioux," was the calm reply.

The chief sighed, for he had failed in relieving his mind and heart of a debt of gratitude he wished to fully pay.

But he saw that the boy was determined, and, shouldering his rifle, he mounted his pony and led the way to a safer camping place than the one where they had halted.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRIENDS TO REMEMBER.

THE hunt of Big Thunder and Yellow Hair turned out a successful one, for not only did the two return with game in abundance, but the chief also had at his belt the scalp of a Cheyenne brave, who, with several others, had attacked the hunters, but been beaten off.

Big Thunder told of the coolness of Yellow Hair, and that his shot had brought down the Cheyenne's pony, while he had killed the rider, and that they had beaten off their enemies, though they were three to one against them.

This fight but served to make Eddie Burgess the more popular with the red-skins, while White Snake told him that he was a son to be proud of, and would one day be chief in his stead, for that the boy ever thought of his home and parents he had not the slightest idea, and believed that the past had been almost wholly obliterated from his memory.

In his lonely exile from his own people, and leading the miserable life he did, White Snake clung to the boy more and more, and became really kind to him in all his words and actions.

But there was another in the village who was drawn most strongly toward the white boy captive, and that one was Star Eyes, the daughter of the Medicine Chief, and whom Yellow Hair had saved from death in the Rapids.

She was much older than the boy, so was not in love with him, yet was drawn toward him with bonds of gratitude she could never sever, and, like Big Thunder, she wished to return the debt she owed him, and to do so hit upon the same method which the chief had.

To make his escape more certain, she enlisted Little Thunder upon her side, and painted in glowing colors to the Indian boy the sorrow of the poor pale-face captive, forced to dwell among a people who were his natural foes.

Little Thunder was duly impressed, and, though he hated to give up his friend, he yet promised Star Eyes to aid in effecting the escape of Yellow Hair.

Together then they concocted a plan in which the two boys were to go off together on a scout, and when near the settlements, Little Thunder was to bid his white brother to return to his own people, and tell him that it was the wish of the maiden and himself, and who were friends that wished to be remembered long after he had ceased to be a dweller in the tepees of the Sioux.

Little dreaming that another attempt to aid his escape was intended, Eddie Burgess went with Little Thunder, as he had with his

father, and almost the same scene was again enacted as on that former occasion, excepting that the Indian boy brought Star Eyes in as an ally, and did not take all the credit to himself.

But, as before, Yellow Hair firmly refused to leave the Sioux village, and, to the surprise of Star Eyes, rode into the camp with Little Thunder, their ponies laden down with game, for, boys though they were, they shamed many of the warriors by their success in the chase.

Can it be that Eddie Burgess, in refusing to escape when freedom was in his very clutch, had learned to love the wild life of an Indian camp, and the cruel foes of his race, even more than he did his own flesh and blood?

Let the sequel show, my kind reader

CHAPTER IX.

YELLOW HAIR'S SECRET.

FOR several days after his return from his trip with Little Thunder, Eddie Burgess seemed most thoughtful, and his boy pard, who watched him most closely, seemed to think that he was regretting that he had not made his escape when the chance to do so was so openly offered.

White Snake also noticed the boy's manner and asked the cause of it; but Eddie said that he did not feel just right, and soon threw off the attack that was upon him, and became as cheerful as before.

But he seemed less inclined to take long hunts, and hung about the village more, seeming to watch with greater interest the movements of the chiefs, and listen more attentively to their talks.

That something was going on in the village was evident, for the warriors conversed much together, their favorite ponies seemed to be taken better care of, and all were busy by day looking to their arms, getting together war-paint, and, in fact, preparing for some grand expedition.

That it was to be on a large scale Eddie knew, as nearly a thousand warriors, half the fighting force of the village, had been picked for the trail, and yet not one word was said as to their destination.

White Snake was to lead the warriors, and he it was who had planned the expedition, whatever it was and where its destination.

But Eddie in vain tried to get an inkling of where such a large force was going, and for what purpose.

He knew that the soldiers dared not, with their few numbers, follow the Indians to their mountain stronghold, and yet he was

aware that the Sioux, in small bands, had harassed the settlements and forts exceedingly during his stay in the village.

At last Yellow Hair discovered that the warriors were to march at dawn on the following day, for White Snake said to him:

"My boy, I am going on a long and dangerous trail, to-morrow, and should I not return remember that you are as my own son, my heir, and that one day you must be chief of this tribe in my stead, for no warrior dare say you nay.

"Now go and bid the head chiefs to meet me within the hour at the grand Medicine Lodge, to hold a secret council."

The boy departed on his errand, and hastily made the circuit of the tepees, bidding each head chief to go to the Medicine Lodge at the appointed hour to meet the White Snake.

Having done this he darted back to his own tepee, and told White Snake that he wished to go with Little Thunder fishing on the river, a pastime the boys frequently indulged in at night.

The permission was granted, and going to the tepee of Little Thunder he bade him go up the river to where the Indians kept their ponies at night in a corral, and await his coming.

Then Yellow Hair sped away like a deer in the direction of the grand Medicine Lodge.

Arriving near he went cautiously along until he saw he was not observed, and then he darted suddenly into the deep shadow of the large tepee.

No council fire was yet lighted within, and all was dark and silent, for it was not yet time for the gathering of the chiefs to meet the White Snake.

Entering the tepee, never before desecrated by the profane foot of one not a chief, the daring boy though considerably awed by his surroundings, felt about the interior until he came to one of the stout lodge poles and up this he clambered with the agility of a cat.

There was a circular opening around the pole, some twelve feet from the ground, and through this Yellow Hair squeezed himself, and found above him another covering of skins for the tepee, which he had before observed had a double roof, or rather was one lodge set over another, only a foot smaller in size. Suspending himself in the hoop of the inner roof, or covering, he quickly cut in the upper, or outer one, half a dozen holes, through which he slipped stout buck-skin strips.

The ends of these he tied securely together, and then he swung himself into them, one passing as a swing under his breast, another at the waist, and a third suspending his feet.

Thus he hung, supported by the stout upper skin roof, and nearly touching the under one, through which he cut several small holes, which would give him a view of the interior of the medicine tepee when the council fire was lighted.

Hardly had he become comfortably, or rather securely, settled in his swings, when some one entered the Medicine Lodge, and a moment after a fire was lighted, and the smoke curled upward and found egress through the holes around the poles that supported the roof and walls of well-dressed skins of wild animals, and nearly suffocated the boy in his secret retreat.

But he smothered the cough that rose in his throat and remained quiet, watching and waiting to discover the secret for which he had risked so much and plotted so well.

CHAPTER X.

THE SECRET COUNCIL.

THROUGH the small slits in the lower covering of the lodge, Eddie Burgess, as soon as he got the smoke out of his eyes and throat, saw the gathering of the chiefs.

The fire had burned into a blaze, so that the smoke no longer troubled him, and one by one the Indian leaders entered, and in stately silence sat around the fire and took out their pipes.

Presently the Medicine Chief entered and threw some light pieces of wood upon the fire, which at once flared up brightly, making a blood-red flame.

"The omen is good, and we will leave a red trail," said White Snake calmly, as he saw the wood burning, and all around the fire, twenty-two in number, gave a satisfactory "Ugh!" in token of their pleasure.

"Now, chiefs," began White Snake, rising, and laying aside his pipe.

"I have asked you here to tell you that our trail leads to the village of our old foes, the Pawnees.

"They have become a powerful tribe of late, for their different villages have come together, and, under their chief, White Eagle, are rich in ponies, arms, pelts, lodges and blankets, and we can crush them.

"They are the friends of the pale-faces, too, and once we strike their village, we can sweep on like a red torrent to the settlements beyond, and make the waters of the Platte crimson with the blood of our enemies.

"To-morrow we strike the trail of war at dawn, and if there is one chief here who dissents, let him now speak.

Such was the speech of White Snake, the renegade chief, and it made Eddie Burgess tremble until he fairly shook the lodge, for the course of the Sioux led them toward his own home.

In dismay he pictured his parents and kindred slain and scalped, his lovely home burned, and nothing but dead bodies and devastation left behind.

He had often seen the Pawnees come to his father's house, and they were most friendly with the whites, he knew.

They had given him many a little present in the past, had treated the pale-faces with great kindness, and he knew that his father respected and liked them exceedingly.

He had feared that the course of the White Snake was toward the settlements, and he risked his life to discover the secret, determined to see what he could do to prevent a surprise and general massacre.

For some time he had noted the great preparations being made to go on the war-path, and to solve the secret as to where the blow would fall was why the brave boy had refused to escape when Big Thunder gave him the opportunity to do so, and again when Star Eyes and Little Thunder planned to aid him.

No, he would go back to the people he hated, excepting the few who had been kind to him, and find out the secret he longed to know, and then he would ride on ahead and give warning of the coming avalanche of death and destruction.

For this reason he had gone to the Council Lodge, and now the secret was known to him and it brought horror to his heart, for what if he should not be able to go ahead and warn the threatened ones of their danger?

The thought was terrible, for before him came the remembrance of the midnight massacre of Mr. Babbitt and his family, and the horrors that he knew well the red Sioux had perpetrated since.

CHAPTER XI.

A GENERAL SURPRISE.

IN answer to the question of White Snake, as to whether any of the chiefs dissented from the proposed war-trail, Big Thunder arose and said:

"The White Snake has chosen well.

"His eyes see far ahead.

"The Pawnees are our foes, and should fall before our braves, and their lodges be set on fire.

"But the pale-faces are also our enemies; they are richer than the Pawnees; they should die under our tomahawks; and yet, if we go to the Pawnee village first, our white foes may escape, or be ready to meet us, so let the White Snake lead half the warriors against the Pawnees, and the Big Thunder will take his band upon the settlements, and we can meet at the fort of the soldier braves and strike them, too."

There were nods of assent to this, but White Snake again arose and said:

"The Big Thunder forgets that our Pawnee foes number many warriors, and that the whites are all well-armed, and can rally quickly, while the soldiers at the fort, with their big horse-guns, can ride like the wind to attack us.

"No, let us keep our thousand braves together, strike the Pawnee village, leave it in flames, and the wailing of women and children behind us, at the scalps we carry at our belts, and then dash on to the settlements.

"There we can get plunder, and fringe our very leggings with scalps, and then, while the Big Thunder, with half our braves, comes on to our village with the booty, the White Snake will attack the pale-face fort, for the soldiers will be off hunting for us, and we can wipe it off from the face of the prairie, as few men will be there to guard it.

"What say the chiefs?"

There was a general nod all around the fire, and Big Thunder said, calmly:

"The White Snake speaks wise words.

"We will do as he says."

Hardly had the words left his lips when, suddenly, the roof of skins shook violently, and, with a startled cry, Eddie Burgess fell upon the head and shoulders of White Snake, knocking him down.

The buckskin thongs had torn out with his weight, and the hoop around the pole, which he had grasped to save himself, also gave way, and down into the midst of the council he went, greatly to the fright and surprise of not only himself, but of the assembled chiefs, who had never anticipated an invasion of the sacred lodge, and especially from above.

A score of knives at once flashed in as many hands, and in an instant the dawning boy would have been slain had not the White Snake, struggling to his feet after the shock, grasped him in one arm, while he cried:

"Back, chiefs! the boy shall die, but not by your knives."

CHAPTER XII.

CONDEMNED.

THAT Eddie Burgess was frightened, there is no room for doubt, at the most unfortunate and dangerous situation in which he found himself; but he had all the stoical manner of an Indian, from his long association with them, and boldly faced the alternative, though his heart fluttered painfully.

It was evident that the chiefs liked not the protection at once given the boy by White Snake, though there was one exception, and he placed himself by the side of Eddie, and said, calmly:

"Big Thunder says with the White Snake."

that this is not the time to kill the boy of the pale-faces.

"Let us wait."

"But why wait, when the pale-face, whom we loved and trusted, has entered the secret Council Lodge?"

"Is he a spy?"

"Or does he seek to become a chief in wisdom before he has cast off the years of a pappoose?" and Flying Feather glanced around upon the crowd for reply, but more particularly let his gaze fall upon White Snake, who answered, in his low, deep tones:

"The White Snake is no coward to spare one he loves, and he says that the boy shall die; but let him think over his crime until our return from the war-trail, and then, when we have our scalp-dance, our people may see how the Sioux chiefs punish one who invades the Council Lodge."

"The White Snake speaks wisely, and we can wait."

"Let the pale-face boy be taken to the Guard Lodge and there kept until our war-trail has ended," said Big Thunder; and the nod of assent came from all, and poor Eddie was led away, feeling terribly blue at his fate.

The one who took him to the Guard Lodge was Flying Feather, a handsome young warrior, as ambitious and vain as he could be to rise to higher rank, and also to win the love of Star Eyes, who had enough of the coquette in her nature to pretend not to care for her lover, though he was her preference above all her other suitors.

As he passed through the village with Eddie, securely bound, he went by the lodge of the Medicine Chief, which, like the council and guard tepees, and that of White Snake, stood some distance apart from the others.

Here he saw Star Eyes, seated before her tepee upon a panther-skin and busy keeping off the musketoes with a fan of her own make.

"Whom has the Feather as prisoner?" said Star Eyes, for in the darkness she did not recognize the boy upon the other side of the young chief.

"The Yellow Hair, and he has been caught listening to the councils of the chiefs in the Medicine Lodge."

Star Eyes sprang to her feet in alarm, while she cried:

"That means he must die by torture of the worst kind!"

"The Star Eyes has spoken," was the answer, with more admiration and thought of the maiden than for the boy and his fate.

"When?" she asked.

"When the braves return from the war-trail they start on at dawn."

"You carry him to the Guard Lodge?"

"Yes."

The maiden made no reply, but walked along with Flying Feather and his prisoner until the Guard Lodge was reached.

There was always kept there a warrior, who acted as sentry, and under his charge the boy was placed by the chief, with orders to keep him there until the return from the war-trail.

Then the young chief and the maiden walked away together, leaving Eddie to his own sad reflections, and bound hand and foot, lying upon a bear-robe.

CHAPTER XIII.

A BLOW IN THE DARK.

FORGETTING his dangers, his sorrows and his sufferings, Eddie Burgess had sunk to sleep, when he was aroused suddenly by a heavy fall.

He half rose to his feet, as far as the thongs would permit, and saw laying across the opening of the tepee the dark form of a warrior.

The next moment there glided into the lodge one whom he quickly recognized.

It was Star Eyes.

Bending over the prostrate warrior, who had been half asleep standing on guard, she bound him with wonderful dexterity and expedition, and then fastened across his mouth, as a gag, bands of stout buckskin.

"Now come with the Star Eyes, who would not see the Yellow Hair die," said the maiden, in a low, earnest tone, and, as she spoke she severed the thongs from the feet and hands of the prisoner.

"The Star Eyes has been good to me; but trouble will come to her for it," said Yellow Hair.

"No, the Runner saw not who dealt the blow, and he is only stunned.

"When the sun rises and another guard comes, the Runner will be well again, and the Yellow Hair can be far away.

"The Star Eyes has ready her own fleet pony, waiting in the valley at the Blue Rock, and she bids the Yellow Hair fly like the wind back to his own people, for here he will die.

"Now let him go, for the warriors waited not for the dawn, but have gone on the war-trail, and the village is quiet."

The information that the band of warriors had started already on the trail, caused Eddie to start; but he knew that when ready for a move the Indians seldom waited the appointed time to depart, and so thought nothing of it.

That the Star Eyes suspected his intention to warn the whites he did not believe; but the band having gone, it was his duty to

be off, and knowing well that the maiden had the fleetest and most long-enduring pony in the village herd, he was but too glad to take her at her word, and ride the animal, the possession of which had caused many a brave to envy her.

"The Little Thunder waits for Yellow Hair at the corral up the valley; will the Star Eyes see him and bid him farewell for me?"

"The Star Eyes will do as the Yellow Hair wishes," was the reply.

"Can the Yellow Hair do any favor for the Star Eyes?" asked the boy.

"The pale-face has spoken; for the Star Eyes asks him, if ever the Flying Feather is the captive of his people, that he sets him free, as the Yellow Hair is now bid go.

"The Yellow Hair will remember, and bids the Star Eyes good-by."

He held forth his hand and the maiden grasped it warmly, and the boy turned away, and taking up his weapons, which Star Eyes had brought him from his tepee, started off at a rapid run.

He soon reached the spot where the Indian girl had left her fleetest pony for him, and mounting him in haste set off in the darkness, for the first time in his long captivity with real joy and hope in his heart.

That he must get ahead of the Sioux he well knew, and he made a detour to avoid them, for he had learned the country well, and kept his pony at a canter until long after the rising of the sun, when he halted for rest and food, for the Star Eyes had not let him come off without a bag of provisions which she had hung to his saddle for him.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PURSUIT.

THERE was great excitement in the Sioux village, the morning after the departure of the warriors upon the war-path, when the discovery was made that the daring pale-face boy, who had attempted to hear the council of the chiefs, by invading the Medicine Lodge, had escaped.

The Indians were in a fever heat anyhow, at the departure of their best fighting braves upon a dangerous trail, and when Runner, the red-skin guard, was found bound and gagged, and with a gash in his head from a severe blow, they were almost wild.

Runner had fully recovered his senses, but he had been too firmly tied and gagged to even move or cry out, and he seemed most happy when relieved from his unpleasant predicament.

His story was soon told.

Flying Feather had brought the boy cap-

tive to the lodge, and left him on a bear robe securely bound.

He had not felt it necessary to look at the thongs that held the boy, and had believed him sleeping, when there came a sudden blow upon his head, and he knew no more until he returned to consciousness and found the boy gone, and himself in durance vile.

That Yellow Hair had freed himself of his thongs and dealt the blow, no one, excepting the Star Eyes and Little Thunder, doubted, and that he had taken the swiftest horse in the village herd, on which to make his escape, proved that he meant not to be retaken if he could prevent it.

At first it was decided to send a runner after White Snake and make known the escape of the pale-face boy; but this the Medicine Chief would not permit, as he said the warriors must have nothing on their minds other than the work before them.

But the old chief ordered a score of young braves to mount the fleetest horses, and follow on the trail of the daring young fugitive.

Claiming that Yellow Hair had taken her horse, Star Eyes said she would also accompany the pursuing party, at least for a short distance, and she called upon Little Thunder to mount his pony and go with her, to serve as an escort, should she return alone.

The Medicine Chief, her father, demurred at this, but the maiden was firm, and the score of young bucks started off, with the Indian girl and boy in their midst.

The trail of Star Eyes's pony was easily followed, owing to a peculiarity of his hoofs, which were exceedingly narrow, and at a gallop the pursuers went on in chase, while, twenty miles ahead, the fugitive was calmly sleeping in a clump of cottonwoods, and his pony was regaling himself upon luxuriant grass and resting himself at the same time.

Yellow Hair was certainly very much fatigued, for he slept late into the afternoon, and awoke with a start.

His pony had enjoyed his grassy feast to his stomach's content, and was standing in an attitude of deep attention and gazing out upon the prairie.

Instantly Eddie Burgess followed the direction of the mustang's gaze, and a cry escaped his lips as he saw a number of horsemen approaching the timber, and not a quarter of a mile distant.

From the position of the sun in the western sky he knew that he had slept for hours, but congratulated himself upon awakening in time to escape his pursuers, for their actions proved that they were following upon his trail.

Had he been in doubt, the warriors he

recognized as Sioux from the village and he also saw in their midst Star Eyes and Little Thunder.

"I know what they have come for.

"It is to save me if I am caught.

"But they'll not catch me, I reckon, for my horse is fresh as a daisy and theirs are jaded and show that they have pushed them hard."

So saying, the boy saddled Birdfoot, as Star Eyes had named her horse, seized his rifle and traps, and, mounting, rode out of the timber just as the Sioux came in good range.

There were several rifles and muskets among the party, and, recognizing the boy, they fired upon him, while they gave vent to wild yells.

Finding that the bullets whistled unpleasantly near, Eddie gave Birdfoot the rein, and away he went like an arrow across the prairie.

In vain did the Indians urge on their tired horses, for Birdfoot was fresh, and had he not been, there was no animal among those on his trail that could equal him in speed and endurance.

The boy well knew that the rifle he carried would kill at the distance he was from the Sioux; but he cared not to fire upon those among whom he had dwelt so long, and, besides, he would not have risked a shot for fear of killing either Star Eyes or Little Thunder.

Keeping out of range, Yellow Hair held on his way until night fell, and, when it was too dark to be seen, he turned square off to the left and waited upon the prairie until the hoof-falls of the ponies told him they had passed on.

Then he set off in a gallop upon a course that he knew led him by the shortest route to the Pawnee camp.

He had ridden only a few miles when he suddenly dashed upon a camp on the prairie.

No camp-fires had been lighted, and men and their well-trained horses were all lying down together, hidden in the deep grass.

His sudden coming had brought scores of braves and ponies to their feet, for they had been watching his coming, and, as he wheeled in flight, they started in pursuit.

As he looked back he heard wild yells, and saw hundreds instead of scores in hot chase, and then he knew that he had run upon the warriors of White Snake, and that his only hope lay in the speed of the animal he rode, for upon that open prairie there was no dodging.

CHAPTER XV.

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

IT was a cruel sight to see a thousand warriors, painted in all the hideousness of sav-

age hate, and thirsting for the life of one poor boy.

They knew not who he was, for little they dreamed that Yellow Hair had escaped from their faithful guard; but they deemed him a foe, and sought to kill him ere he should spread the alarm among the settlements that a large force of Sioux were on the war-path.

On flew Birdfoot, urged hard by his boy rider, and hotly after came the long line of savage horsemen, and it seemed but a question of endurance, for Eddie's horse, tired by his long gallop, could not drop those animals now on his track as readily as he had the pursuing party that had come upon him in the afternoon.

Though weary, the boy felt that Birdfoot could hold on for several hours, and he shouted with delight as a distant line of timber broke the horizon, for once in the woodland, he felt sure of dropping his foes.

Nearer and nearer he came to the dark line, and his heart beat high with hope, for White Snake had made his braves so well pick their horses that they held their own well with the famous Birdfoot.

At last the woods were but half a mile away, and glancing backward, the boy saw that one of his pursuers had dropped the others behind and was positively gaining upon him.

The rider was on a snow-white animal, and the boy muttered:

"It is the White Snake upon his new horse, which he captured in his last raid.

"He always said the horse could beat Birdfoot, and he's about right.

"On, pony, or I'll lose my scalp yet, and if I do, many more will go, for I bear important tidings."

As though understanding the words of his youthful rider, and sympathizing with him, Birdfoot exerted himself tremendously, and for a moment seemed to hold his own with the white horse on his track; but the effort did not last long, and seemed to tire the mustang the more, for not only did his pace decrease and the white gain more rapidly, but several others of the band drew nearer.

It was a critical and fearful moment for the boy, for the woods were further away from him than were his foes.

"I could kill the Snake; but he was kind to me and did save my life, and I won't," he muttered.

"But I'll drop the next man, though," he continued, and he brought his rifle round.

But suddenly he peered more closely at the one he intended to fire upon, and said:

"The Flying Feather rides a spotted mustang; and I can see spots on that one, so I'll keep my word to Star Eyes and let him off.

"But the next must go."

Again he peered earnestly at the horse that was third in the race, and again he hesitated, while he said:

"Big Thunder rides a cream-colored pony, and that may be old Thunder, and I'll let him off.

"But here goes for number four, no matter who it is."

As he spoke, his rifle flashed, and a wild war-cry followed and he saw the fourth horseman from him fall heavily from his saddle.

A furious chorus of war-cries followed the shot, and they caused Yellow Hair to lash Birdfoot savagely, and, snorting with pain, the animal bounded on for a few paces with renewed speed.

But it did not last, and still his pursuers gained rapidly.

"They won't shoot me because they wish to kill me by torture, and they think they've got me, and I don't know but what they think right," he grimly added.

A few more bounds and the staggering Birdfoot was in the shadow of the timber.

But so were his pursuers, or at least half a dozen of them, with hundreds more stretching a mile back, and the white horse not a dozen lengths behind him.

To dodge was impossible, and all the boy could do was to hold on his way.

But suddenly before him he heard a roar, and there, almost beneath the feet of his horse, was a deep abyss.

He knew at a glance that he was on the verge of a precipice, and that the river lay a hundred feet below, and he remembered hearing the warriors tell of that very spot.

He could rein Birdfoot back and save himself the fearful leap; but he knew that death would soon follow.

No, it was certain death to be taken, and it seemed as sure death to go over that dizzy height.

In times of mortal peril we think with lightning rapidity, and at once did Eddie Burgess decide upon his course.

He would take the leap.

Did his horse falter, he would spring from him and take the leap alone.

But the animal was blind with fatigue, and only rushed onward, urged by the lash, and even his instinct so benumbed that he failed to recognize the danger ahead.

The next instant, in grim silence, Yellow Hair saw the precipice beneath the forefeet of his horse, and then the animal bounded forth into the air, seemed to be poised for a moment, and then went downward with fearful velocity, while a wild, terrified shriek burst from the doomed horse.

CHAPTER XVI.

MAKING USE OF A FOE.

EVEN in the mortal peril of his descent the brave boy had glanced over his shoulder to see if White Snake and his warriors, unmindful of danger, took the fearful leap in the dark over the precipice.

But the hasty glance showed him that they had drawn suddenly up, and he knew that he went alone into the dark depths below him, and which perhaps might be the depths of death.

In fact, he had no hope that it would prove otherwise.

Bracing himself as well as he could, he clung to his horse, and though the animal turned twice over, he never left his seat.

Then, feet first, Birdfoot went downward, cleaving the air like an arrow, and, with a report that echoed like the explosion of a cannon, struck the water and sunk beneath the flood.

In the shock that followed the boy lost hold of his trusty rifle, and the waters tore from him his bow and quiver of arrows.

But he felt that he was safe, that he was not hurt, and yet knew that Birdfoot had been killed, for not a struggle did the noble animal make in the waters.

Rising to the surface, Eddie struck out for the bank opposite to the precipice, and soon gained it.

Seating himself, he began to ponder over his miraculous escape, and wonder what was best for him to do, when the voices of the Sioux on the cliff told him that they believed him dead, and hence felt no further anxiety on his account.

Listening to their conversation, he discovered that they intended to go into camp in the timber, and distinctly heard White Snake's deep tones give the order to stake the ponies out upon the prairie, and set half a dozen guards over them.

"Aha! only half a dozen guards over a thousand ponies!

"Well, I guess there's no need of my going on foot the rest of the way to the settlements," muttered the boy, triumphantly, and at once he entered the stream again and swam for the other shore.

It was difficult to find a landing, as the rocks were like walls, but after going downstream for some distance he gained a footing, and as cautiously as he could clambered up the steep bank.

At last he reached the woodland above, and knew that the Indian camp was near, though all was as silent as the grave, and, not wishing to attract attention, they had not built a single fire.

The last straggler had come in, it seemed,

and Yellow Hair at once set about the duty before him.

Making a detour on the prairie, he soon came in sight of the numerous ponies resting and feeding after their run.

To approach the herd and not be seen by the watchful sentinels, he knew was next to impossible, should he go in an upright position.

But throwing himself upon his face, he began to creep through the tall grass.

As noiselessly almost as a snake he continued his way, until suddenly he saw a dark object near him.

It was a pony feeding, and he knew he was within the line of sentinels, and in the midst of the herd.

Creeping still further, he suddenly stood up, and saw around him numerous ponies, who eyed him curiously as he went near them, but showed no dread of him.

From one part of the herd to the other he went boldly, for he did not anticipate being seen there by the sentinels, and every horse was critically examined.

It was evident that he was searching for some particular animal, for whenever he saw a white horse, up to him he went and scrutinized him closely.

"This is Flying Feather's horse, and he'll do, if I can't find the Snake's," he muttered, which told the secret of his careful search.

At last, near the edge of the timber, he came upon the coveted steed, and examined him most closely, to see that there could be no doubt.

No, there was none, for at the lariat pin lay the saddle and bridle of the renegade chief.

Quickly saddling the animal, he pulled up the pin and moved slowly through the herd toward the outer edge.

Arriving near where he thought a sentinel must be, the cunning boy did not boldly push out upon the prairie, but staking out the white once more, he pulled up a lariat pin of a pony near by, and drove him toward the open prairie.

Almost instantly he was headed off by a guard, who arose from the grass, and catching him, again drove the lariat stake into the ground.

Going some distance up the line, he again turned a pony loose, and this one was also driven back by the guard.

Then he knew just the distance apart the sentinels were, and he went back and led the white to a spot half-way between them.

Lying down once more in the grass, he gradually edged out of the line, leading the white steed, who leisurely browsed along, and at last felt that he had passed through without attracting the attention of the Indian

guards, who were fully a hundred yards from him.

But he did not urge the horse on until he could himself no longer discern any of the herd, and then he threw himself into the saddle, and could hardly suppress a cry of joy.

But though he had escaped, and had a good horse under him, he knew that he had a long ride before him, and that he was unarmed, excepting his knife, his pistol having been lost in his leap over the cliff.

But Eddie Burgess was no boy to despair, and with a bold heart he turned the head of his horse toward the settlements.

CHAPTER XVII.

FIGHTING FATE.

DETERMINED to lose no time in his purpose to warn the Pawnee village of their danger, and through their runners to spread the news through the settlements and forts, Eddie Burgess kept the noble white animal he bestrode at a steady and rapid gallop.

His life among the Indians had taught him well how to shape his course by the stars, and he held steadily for the eastward with perfect confidence that he was going right.

His horse, although he had been pushed hard by White Snake in the chase after Birdfoot, did not seem to show fatigue, and little cared for the weight upon his back in comparison with the two hundred pounds of the chief.

"The Snake was right in saying this was the fastest animal on the prairies," said Eddie, more and more pleased with the capture he had so daringly made.

"I can stand the hunger if the white will only stand the journey, and he can have plenty to eat and drink," the young rider said, as was his wont, talking aloud to himself.

And it certainly looked as though the white horse would stand the ride well, for when the sun rose, and he had been for five hours on the way without a halt, he still kept up his seemingly untiring lope, that threw behind him seven miles to the hour as regularly as clock-work.

Shortly after sunrise Yellow Hair halted in some timber, where was a cool stream and plenty of grass, both of which White Snake, as the boy named the horse, greatly enjoyed, and only one of which he could indulge in.

He viewed the animal almost enviously as he saw him cropping the juicy grass, for he had not eaten anything since the morning before, excepting a piece of jerked buffalo-meat he had munched in his flight.

Remembering his long sleep of the previous day, which had so nearly cost him his life, he would not permit himself to take even a nap, and walked about vigorously to

keep awake while waiting for his horse to eat and rest.

After two hours' stop he mounted and once more pressed on in the same steady lope as before, and did not again halt until afternoon, when again he gave the faithful animal a rest.

At sunset, seeing no signs of pursuers across the prairie, he once more drew rein in a small motte, and as he saw the enjoyment with which the animal partook of his food, and felt the gnawings of intense hunger in his stomach, he said, earnestly:

"I do wish I was a horse, or at least could eat grass."

But he was not a horse, and could not eat grass, and was obliged to suffer on, while, not daring to give way to the drowsiness that possessed him, he again rode on.

And all through the long night he pressed on, and at a pace that he knew must keep him well in advance of the White Snake and his band, and bring him the next morning in the neighborhood of the Pawnee camp, from what he knew of its locality through the talking of the Sioux.

But then, to his dismay, he began to at last see signs of falling in his noble horse.

He slackened his pace a little and it seemed to help the animal, and mile after mile was again left behind.

But it was evident that the horse was very weary, and when, at dawn, a piece of timber was reached, through which glided a cool, crystal stream, its banks hidden beneath luxuriant grass, the horse bowed his tired head and neither ate nor drank, Yellow Hair became indeed alarmed for him.

Forgetting his own pangs of hunger, he dismounted, stripped off the saddle, and with bunches of grass groomed the animal for an hour, and then led him to the stream.

Instantly he thrust his nostrils deep into the cool waters and took a generous draught, yet he seemed too tired yet to feed, and lay down to rest his worn-out limbs.

Yellow Hair watched him anxiously, and then, to keep himself awake, he took a bath, and while sitting down, putting on his moccasins, for he was rigged out in full Indian toggery, he fell fast asleep.

Awaking with a start he was on his feet in an instant, and for a moment seemed bewildered, for it was hard for him to collect his worn-out, scattered senses; but catching sight of his horse near, no longer lying down, but quietly feeding, he recalled all, and though unrefreshed by his nap, and suffering greatly, determined to press on once more, for time was most precious to him he well knew.

The faithful horse seemed to appreciate fully the boy's situation, and willingly sub-

mitted to being saddled, and again set out with some show of his former style.

But he had gone too far, and been driven too hard to keep it up for a great length of time, and within an hour was again shuffling along with head lowered.

But Yellow Hair felt that he could no longer spare him, and kept him urged to his utmost, until he left the prairie and entered upon rolling woodland.

He knew that the Pawnee camp could not be many miles away, and longed to meet some scout or hunter; but in vain he looked and hoped, for not a human being was in sight.

For awhile the change from a level to hills seemed to cause the horse to rally, as other muscles besides those so long and steadily used were brought into play; but it was a spurt that soon gave out, and at last the utterly worn-down animal could go no further, and came to a halt.

"Well, good horse, you have done your best, and I don't believe another could do what you have, so I'll not force you further," and, so saying, Yellow Hair took off the saddle and bridle, and hanging them on a limb of a tree near by, patted the animal affectionately, and, at a swinging Indian trot, struck off on foot, not yet conquered by the adverse circumstances that beset his path.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN UNLOOKED-FOR FOE.

HARDLY had Yellow Hair gone fifty yards from his horse, who was looking after him wistfully, as though sorrowful at being deserted as soon as he could do no more, when he came to a sudden stop.

And no wonder, for right in his pathway he saw something he had little dreamed of seeing, and enough to strike terror to the heart of any man.

It was not one of White Snake's band that had headed him off, nor one of the score of warriors that had been pursuing him.

Nor was it a human being.

On the contrary, it was a wild beast, and one which the boy well knew to be one of the most dangerous animals to be met with in the hills and mountains of the West.

It was a panther, with the glare of devilry in his eyes, as he crouched in the path of the brave youth, and not ten paces from him.

It was an unexpected foe, and one to be shunned unless most thoroughly armed, and confident in one's own powers to meet and subdue any danger.

But Eddie Burgess, as I have said, was armed only with his long knife, and he was a boy about to face what few men dare meet in deadly combat.

The panther crouched low, as though preparing for the fatal leap, and dragged himself inch by inch nearer his enemy, while he lashed his tail nervously.

The boy knew that he dare not attempt to retreat, for that would at once bring on the fight.

Yet he dared not meet the panther could it be avoided.

Calmly, even in the face of such danger, he ripped up his outer shirt of buck-skin, and wrapped it securely around his left arm.

Then he tightened his belt, and, with his knife held in an iron gripe, marched boldly upon the savage beast.

If the struggle must come he would force the fighting and bring it on at once, ending the battle as best he could.

The panther, somewhat awed at the bold approach of the youth, gave ground, but retreated backward, and still the more nervously switched his tail.

Yellow Hair kept his eyes upon those of the beast, and seeing him show signs of weakening advanced still more rapidly.

But the panther had evidently met human foes before, and finding that the shot he expected evidently, did not come, he halted, and though Yellow Hair advanced steadily refused to retreat further.

Most anxious to avoid, if in his power, the unequal combat, Eddie Burgess tried the effect of a backward movement himself.

It seemed just what the beast wanted, for with a savage whine, he trotted quickly toward the youth, but halted when his enemy again advanced.

Yet, advance as he might, the boy could drive him no further, and with the same reckless feeling that had urged him in every desperate danger of his life before, the daring boy at bay determined to at once solve the doubt of who was to be the master, the human or the brute.

With a ringing yell he sprang toward the panther, which jumped lightly backward for a couple of bounds, then halted, crouched and gave the leap he had so long meditated.

Quick as a flash Eddie sprang aside, and the panther missed his game and fell heavily, and deep into his back went the keen blade, driven with a hand that meant to kill.

It hit hard, but it did not kill, and with a terrific shriek of commingled rage and pain the brute turned upon his foe.

Instantly his jaws closed upon the buck-skin bundled arm, while another blow of the knife entered his neck and caused him to release his hold of the arm and spring at the throat of his enemy.

But the boy was like lightning in his movements, perfectly calm and full of nerve, and again the shielded arm was caught in

the glittering teeth, which this time pierced through to the bone.

But, without a wince at the pain, the brave youth again thrust his knife into the red hide, and the blood spurted in torrents from the wound.

But the cruel claws also tore gashes in the breast and legs of the boy, and he felt that the fight was indeed one to the death.

But he would not say die, and his nerve not leaving him, he took one savage bite, to get a good thrust at the side of the brute, and that thrust went home, for the blade cut into the heart of the panther.

Down he dropped, dragging the boy after him; but the jaws at once relaxed their gripe, and the human had triumphed over the brute.

Springing to his feet, Eddie Burgess felt the necessity of instantly doing something to save his life, for he was bleeding freely from a dozen gashes and bites.

His horse he saw had not moved even during the struggle, and he knew that help there was useless.

Running to the stream near by, he bathed and bound up his wounds as well as he could, to stanch the flow of blood, and with a glance at the dead brute, again set forth in a trot to endeavor to reach the Pawnee village before he fainted from weakness.

On, on he went, almost blind with the exertions he made to keep up, and the loss of blood; but still determined, and at last, just as he felt that he could go no further, he reached the top of a hill, and in the valley below beheld hundreds of tepees spread out before his eyes.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WARNING.

WITH the proverbial laziness of Indians, when not on the war-path, or hunting, the Pawnees were taking it very coolly in their village, and little dreaming of danger.

The squaws were busy gossiping, for Indian women even are gossips, and the children were working harder in playing games, than they ever would to earn a living, while the warriors lolled about in the shade, some asleep, others smoking, many gambling, for inveterate gamblers are red-skins, and a few rubbing up their weapons.

No guards were kept over the village, for the Pawnees were at peace with the pale-faces, and they little dreaded danger from either Cheyenne or Sioux, their natural foes, so near the white settlements and the big forts.

The Indian children were the first to make the discovery that a strange looking being was coming into the village.

Dismayed at his appearance, for he was

covered with blood from head to foot, and his clothes were in tatters, they fled, and this caused the squaws to discover the cause.

Instantly their wild chattering made the warriors understand that something of an unusual nature was going on, and waking up and arousing themselves from their smoking and gambling, they saw a mere boy coming toward the tepees at a staggering trot.

He wore no head-dress, was a pale-face, though tanned to the hue of an Indian almost; had long golden hair, unkempt and tangled, and his face was scarred and bleeding, his breast severely torn, his leggings in tatters, and his left arm hanging limp at his side and severely mangled, it seemed.

"Is this White Eagle's village of Pawnees?"

The question came hastily from the lips of Eddie Burgess, and was addressed to half a hundred warriors whom he confronted.

"The pale-face boy speaks straight," said an old chief, and then he added:

"The White Eagle is here."

"Then call your warriors to defend their village, and send runners to the pale-face forts and settlements, for White Snake, and, oh! so many of his Sioux braves are coming on the trail to attack you."

The words fell like a thunderbolt upon the Indians, and a hundred questions were put in a breath.

But they fell upon ears that heard not, for the brave boy had at last succumbed to the odds against him, and fainted.

But he had given the warning, and White Eagle, the head chief, was no man to slight it, even from the lips of a pale-face boy.

CHAPTER XX.

THE AMBUSH.

THE Indians certainly are naturally good surgeons and medicine-men, for there are few wounds they cannot heal, unless fatal, and their knowledge of curative herbs is something wonderful.

They soon discovered that the wounds received by Eddie Burgess were from the teeth and claws of a wild beast, and not, as they had first believed, from an encounter with a human being.

Instantly White Eagle sent the youth in the care of his head medicine-man, who was most appropriately known as Pain Killer, and he dressed the wounds with a skill that would have been an instructive lesson to a hospital surgeon, and soon restored his patient to consciousness.

The haggard face and deep-sunken eyes of the boy also told the skilled man of herbs that there was something else than the wounds the matter with his patient, and a question or two soon got at the truth that

the youth was nearly starved and half dead for want of sleep.

At once he had a nutritious dish, or rather gourd, of Indian meal prepared, and gave it to the boy, who ate it greedily, and then told his story to the Medicine Chief and White Eagle, who had been sent for.

"I have sent my young men to the forts and settlements, to give the warning you have given me, and my warriors are all ready for the battle, and the squaws and children in safety," said White Eagle.

"What number of warriors have you?" asked Eddie Burgess.

"Four hundred."

"They will be swept away if they meet the Sioux on the open plain here," was the cool remark of the boy, and seeing the astonishment of the two chiefs, he continued:

"The White Snake is a white renegade chief, and knows well how to fight his braves.

"Besides, he has a thousand picked warriors and ponies with him."

"And how far away is the White Snake now?" anxiously asked White Eagle.

Yellow Hair told him where he had left the Sioux, and at what hour, and the Pawnees gave a sigh of relief, for they knew that, though the boy had made marvelous time, it would yet be hours, perhaps not until the following day, before the Sioux could possibly arrive.

But White Eagle was most nervous for he knew well that few soldiers were at the forts, and many of the settlers had gone down into Kansas for cattle, to replace those lost in former raids of the Sioux.

All told they could not, Pawnees and pale-faces, bring as large a force into the fight as could the White Snake, and he frankly told the boy so.

"Then use strategy, and meet them on safer terms," said the precocious youth.

"How?"

It was an exclamation and question both, and Eddie Burgess answered it with:

"Back in the hills, before I met the panther, I passed through a canyon where the Pawnees can ambush the Sioux, and that will make you equal."

White Eagle was a great chief, but he was willing to learn wisdom even from a boy, and he jumped at the idea, and when Eddie Burgess boldly said he would go with them and join in the fight, he called his warriors around him and explained the plan of battle, and half an hour after the four hundred Pawnee braves were on the way to the place of ambush.

Though strengthened by the food he had eaten, and with his wounds well dressed, Eddie Burgess suffered greatly; but he bore

it with a grin, and mounted on a mustang, rode side by side with the head chief.

After a ride of two leagues they came to the scene of the panther fight, and the warriors gazed upon the boy with renewed admiration when they looked upon the dead brute.

As nervy as his boy rider, the white horse had also rallied, and was feeding quietly when they rode up, and knowing the value of the animal, Eddie at once seized upon him again.

Half a mile further on they came to the canyon of which Yellow Hair had spoken as the place for an ambush, and White Eagle at once saw its strong points, and soon had his braves in their proper places, ready for the coming fray, for he knew that the Sioux could not approach the Pawnee village except through that pass, unless they made a circuit of many miles around, and first struck the settlements, which the youth insisted he was certain White Snake would not do.

As soon as he had taken up his situation, which was next to the chief, Yellow Hair laid down upon a blanket spread for him by White Eagle, and at once sunk into a deep sleep.

And while he slept the day passed, the sun set, and yet no sign was visible of the coming Sioux.

Then darkness came on, and trusty scouts were sent off on the prairie to see if any tidings could be gained of their foes.

Slowly the hours passed, and, utterly prostrated, Eddie Burgess slept on and midnight came.

One, two, three hours more went by, and then several dark forms were visible coming at a rapid pace.

They were the scouts returning, and their report confirmed the warning brought by the pale-face boy, for they said the whole prairie seemed covered with mounted Sioux.

Instantly all the Pawnees were on the alert, Eddie Burgess was aroused, and then all watched and waited.

They had not long to wait, for soon a dark, compact mass appeared in sight, and it was seen that White Snake had gathered in his stragglers, and all came in solid column to dash upon the Pawnee village, which they little knew were anxiously expecting them.

Nearer and nearer came the Sioux, riding ten abreast, and with White Snake, Big Thunder and Flying Feather in advance, and Yellow Hair whispered to White Eagle:

"Let those in advance pass through the ambush before you give the signal."

The old chief nodded assent, and the three Sioux leaders had gotten entirely through the canyon, when, above the tramp of many hoofs, arose one long, loud war-cry, and its

echoes were drowned in the rattle of many rifles, while hundreds of deadly arrows were poured upon the crowded mass of horsemen with fearful effect.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BOY CHIEF.

WHITE SNAKE was not a second in discovering that he had been caught in his own trap, and that it was a case of the intended biter being bitten.

The well delivered volley of the Pawnees, led him to believe that these were white troops ambushing him, and as to the force that opposed him, he had no means of judging, and, unable to return blow for blow, that was no time to find out.

How his intended raid had been discovered was like a miracle to him, for he had come on as rapidly as horseflesh and human endurance could bring him.

But certain it was he had been expected, and the welcome he received, caused many a Sioux and pony to go down in the dust.

His quick eye, however, noted that there were some two hundred warriors near him that he could call on, and then came the death-heap, next a huddled mass of horses and riders, not knowing which way to turn, and further on some who had not entered the ambush.

To cut his way back was impossible over that heap of dead beasts and men, and to run the gantlet of the galling fire from the sides and tops of the canyon would be but to rush to certain death.

He therefore determined upon one thing, and that was to rally around him every warrior he could and push on to the Pawnee village, do there his deadly work, and mounted upon what fresh animals they could pick up to swoop down upon the settlements like a whirlwind, and at least gain the joy of revenge, if he did fail in the expedition.

His ringing war-cry at once brought every warrior near him to his side, and away the daring renegade chief dashed, with fully three hundred braves at his back, and such men as Big Thunder and Flying Feather to him in the command of them.

With horror the Pawnees saw the move of the renegade chief, and surmised his intention with true Indian cunning; but what could they do to prevent it, for, did they leave their ambush, there was a larger number than their own left to oppose them.

Having fallen back out of the ambush the Sioux showed no desire to retreat further, and thus their determined stand kept the Pawnees at bay as it was.

But, unable to stand the agony of the thought that his village would be given to the flames, his women and children mur-

dered and scalped, White Eagle determined to at once press on in chase of those who had gone to strike the deadly blow.

Already was the command upon his lips to follow him, when he was checked by Yellow Hair, who cried quickly:

"If you retreat with your warriors from your position here, you leave the pass unguarded, and the Sioux yonder will pursue you, and you will be between two fires.

"The pale-face is a pappoose warrior, and his words are wisdom; but what is the White Eagle to do?"

"Let the White Eagle give quiet orders to half of his braves here to silently retreat to their ponies, and pursue the Sioux, while the remainder stay here to defend this pass, and keep back those foes yonder."

The hand of the White Eagle fell heavily upon the shoulder of the lad, who winced under the pain the stroke caused to shoot through every wound, while he fairly hissed forth:

"The pale-face boy shall be a Pawnee chief in my tribe, for his words are wise, and his heart is as brave as any warrior among my people.

"Let him remain here, and my warriors shall obey him as their chief, and the White Eagle will ride on with half of his braves on the trail of the Sioux who go to burn my village."

Eddie Burgess was positively astounded at the honor and importance thrust so suddenly upon his young shoulders; but he rallied from his surprise, and at once set to work planning to defeat the cunning of the Sioux who had retreated to a distance, and were evidently plotting mischief and revenge.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RED TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

It was growing light rapidly, when the White Eagle and his two hundred braves departed, and the Boy Chief, whose authority now not one of the remaining warriors disputed, determined to make as great a show of force as possible, so dispatched small bands on either side of the canyon, to show themselves upon the hills, that the Sioux out on the prairie might think they had a large number to attack.

It was evident that those who had retreated out of the ambush, were considerably nonplused by their defeat, and were alarmed for the safety of the White Snake, and their comrades whom they had seen follow him at his ringing call.

Had the canyon not been blocked up with half a hundred horses and three-score dead, with many wounded, they would boldly have attempted to charge through, and rejoin the

White Snake, in whose presence they seemed to feel was their safety.

But the leaders who were left over them, saw the madness of this move, and they could but stand and talk, while their tired ponies got the rest and food they so much needed.

But, worst of all, as soon as the day grew bright, the infuriated Sioux were forced to stand and see the Pawnees descend by scores from the sides of the canyon, and begin the, to them, pleasing duty of scalping their dead and wounded foes, at the same time bestowing upon the latter all kinds of torture which Indian cruelty could dictate.

To drive them from their red work, the Sioux quickly mounted their ponies, and came forward at a gallop, as though intending to break through the canyon, or to attack the stronghold.

But a few jumps carried the gloating Pawnees back to their retreats, and with savage yells the Sioux swooped round and retreated to the prairie once more, while the red work again was renewed in the canyon.

Thus several hours passed away, and anxiously had the Pawnees listened to the hot fighting being waged in the direction of their village, and wondered what the end would be.

Toward noon an Indian courier arrived with news for Yellow Hair, the Boy Chief, and he came from White Eagle.

He had a sad story to tell of the fury of White Snake against the village, the massacre of many squaws and children, the burning of tepees, and then the fierce fight that followed when White Eagle and his braves came up.

They had forced the retreat of the Sioux, it was true, but not until the saddest of red scenes had been left behind them, and the Pawnees, from the true aim of their foes, were so crippled by the loss of their ponies, they had not force enough to pursue and seek revenge.

The White Eagle begged the Boy Chief, if he thought proper, to send him on the ponies of the warriors under his command, and as many braves as he dared spare him.

Instantly Yellow Hair ordered fifty warriors to go to the aid of White Eagle, and to carry with them any pony capable of doing good work in chasing the retreating Sioux.

The red-skins on the prairie also heard the firing at the Pawnee village, and grew most nervous, for they knew their desperate chief, White Snake, was having it hot and fierce, and they were unable to go to his aid.

But when the firing got further and further away, and it was evident that their comrades were retreating, perhaps flying in hot haste before vastly inferior numbers, they suddenly mounted their ponies, and just as

darkness came on moved slowly toward the canyon as though to make a last, desperate attack.

But in vain the Pawnees waited, peering through the darkness, as the time passed away and no attack was begun, until, to relieve the suspense, Yellow Hair sent out several good scouts, and before long triumphant war-cries were heard out on the prairies.

They came, too, from the throats of Pawnee warriors, and before long it was known that the Sioux had retreated, and were then far away across the prairie.

After a long night of waiting, the dawn again broke, and a shout of triumph arose from every Pawnee brave who gazed out upon the prairie, for nowhere was there visible a Sioux, other than the dead in the canyon.

But mingling with the triumphant war-cries, soon after came the wailing of sorrow, for upon returning to the valley where had been their fine village, they found only ashes and the dead carcasses of braves, women, children, ponies and dogs, for the Sioux had shown no mercy to mankind or beast.

Huddled together on the hillside, burying their scalpless dead, were the women and children who had escaped the massacre, while White Eagle and his gallant warriors were far away, following close on the trail of their enemies, who, with the venom of hatred, had swooped down upon the settlement, spreading death and desolation in their trail.

It was bad enough, all knew, from the oldest warrior down to the pappoose; but that it would have been far worse, and none left to tell the tale, had it not been for Yellow Hair, all fully realized, and with almost awe and marked respect the red-skins gazed upon their Boy Chief, and not one was there who raised a dissenting voice to the honor conferred upon a pale-face boy, for they deemed that he had well won his rank, and he had shown himself in every way fitted to command.

Two days passed away, and rallying from their grief, the Pawnees were putting up new lodges and rebuilding their village, when back upon the desolate scene, weary, haggard and stern-faced, came White Eagle and the remnant of his band.

But over the sad faces suddenly gleamed malignant joy, for in the midst of the Pawnee braves were a score of captive Sioux, the two most prominent being Big Thunder and Flying Feather.

But White Snake, with his usual luck, had led his warriors on their red trail and escaped in safety, and none dare follow him to his mountain fastnesses.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CAPTIVE CHIEFS.

THOUGH not of a serious nature, the wounds of Yellow Hair were very painful, and he was glad enough to get rest in a newly-erected tepee, and be under the especial care of the Medicine Chief of the village.

His years of captivity among the Sioux had made him as much Indian as pale-face, and he spoke the Pawnee tongue well enough when a little boy to pick it up after a few days' practice.

His life among the Sioux White Eagle had made known to his braves, and it at once was spread over the village with the same celerity that a piece of news of an interesting kind will travel in a civilized community, for many of the habits of barbarism are strangely alike to those of civilization.

If Yellow Hair had wanted a hunting-shirt and pair of leggings when he came to the Pawnee village, he did not have that need long, for all the maidens of the tribe vied with each other in making for him all kinds of apparel from the finest dressed skins, and the young braves erected for their Boy Chief a tepee that even surpassed that of White Eagle himself.

The Pawnees were not a people to be crushed by misfortunes, and their village rapidly grew in size and beauty under industrious hands, while their grief for their dead was mitigated in a great measure by the consolation of anticipated revenge, which to them was a ruling passion.

They had taken many scalps, and they had a score of closely-guarded Sioux captives, among whom were two great chiefs, whom they were keeping for a state occasion, when they were to be put to death by torture of the most fearful kind, and which the torturers of the tribe were daily studying up to make more terrible than even Indian deviltry and refinement of cruelty had ever concocted before.

The occasion of state was to be when the village was wholly rebuilt, and there was to be held a triumphant scalp-dance, which was to be followed by the exercises in which the Sioux prisoners were to be the unfortunate participants.

Of two of those prisoners the Boy Chief often thought, and he conned over and over in his mind as to what course he would pursue in regard to them.

For the others he did not care, but for Big Thunder and Flying Feather he did care.

Not but that he knew they both richly deserved death, but he had taken a great fancy to the stern-faced old chief after his effort to set him free, and he had given his pledge to Star Eyes that her lover should not die, if in his power to save him.

But how to save them was the question.

As soon as he felt himself again, the Boy Chief dressed in his finest toggery and sallied forth to visit the prisoners.

He found the rank of the two chiefs recognized even by their foes, for they were confined in a tepee together, while their braves were kept in a log pen not far distant, and securely bound as well as imprisoned.

During their intimacy with the whites the Pawnees had learned some of their methods of acting toward prisoners, and some of the light-fingered braves, having stolen several pairs of handcuffs, these had been devoted to the use of Big Thunder and Flying Feather, where common rawhide thongs served for the Sioux warriors.

Ascertaining from the two weeks guarding the tepee of the chiefs, that they could not speak or understand a word of Sioux, to save their scalps, the Boy Chief suddenly astounded the prisoners by appearing before them with the single ejaculation:

"How?"

"How?" uttered both Big Thunder and Flying Feather in chorus, and just how it was that they saw him before them, when they believed him far away in their village, was what they wished to know.

Yellow Hair smiled blandly upon them, and said in Sioux:

"The White Snake left his two best chiefs to die."

"The White Snake fought like the Bad Spirit, but he could not save us," said Big Thunder, and though he was consumed with curiosity, he would not ask what Yellow Hair was doing in the Pawnee camp, and dressed as gay as an Indian dandy.

"Well, the White Snake has fled back to his village, and the wailing of his children and tears of squaws will welcome him, for he left many braves behind him," said Eddie Burgess, unconsciously assuming the pompous manner of speaking almost habitual with the Sioux.

"The Sioux squaws know what it is to weep, and the Sioux children to wait for dead braves who die in battle, and go to the happy hunting grounds of their people," said Flying Feather, calmly?

"Well, what says the Big Thunder and Flying Feather, when I tell them that they are to be tortured to death?"

"Will they be as brave then as when in battle?"

"The Flying Feather thought the Yellow Hair was a pale-face, but he finds him a Pawnee," contemptuously said the young chief.

"Yes; the Yellow Hair is a Pawnee chief, for he it was who warned the village of the

coming of the White Snake, and sent word to the forts and settlement.

"Oh! the Yellow Hair has not forgotten the cruelties of the Sioux, though he lived long among them.

"He has remembered in darkness and in light, and he escaped all danger, even when a thousand Sioux were on his track, and he went over the cliff into the river to warn the Pawnees of their danger.

"It was the Yellow Hair that bade the White Eagle with his few warriors to fight the Sioux in the canyon, and the Pawnees now call him chief.

"Now the Big Thunder and Flying Feather can be all that the Yellow Hair is.

"He has a pale face, but he loves revenge against those who killed and scalped those he loved, and took him into captivity."

Eddie Burgess spoke rapidly and earnestly, and when he ceased, neither of the two chiefs uttered a word; but it was evident that their thoughts were busy.

For some time a silence fell upon all three and then the Boy Chief said:

"The Yellow Hair has not forgotten what he owes the Big Thunder, nor that he has promised that the Flying Feather shall not die, if in his power to prevent it, and he will not see them die.

"Their braves must die by torture, but the Big Thunder and Flying Feather shall return to their people and tell that the Yellow Hair has a heart."

The two Sioux smiled doubtingly; but Yellow Hair went on:

"To-night let them listen to the cry of the whippowil, and be ready, for they shall be free."

Big Thunder silently held up his manacled hands; but the Boy Chief said simply, as he turned away:

"The Yellow Hair has spoken, and his tongue is not crooked."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WHIPPOWIL'S CALL.

In spite of the stoicism of their natures, and the training of years, and which they had been subjected to from childhood, never to betray by emotion, or expression, a thought or feeling within their brain or hearts, both Big Thunder and Flying Feather were certainly nervous as darkness came on.

The words of Yellow Hair had raised high their hopes; but then came the doubt that he might be trifling with them, simply to add to their torture.

Big Thunder knew, far better than did the younger chief, that Yellow Hair really had

cause to befriend him; but he kept this secret to himself.

But Flying Feather had not been made a confidant by Star Eyes, and knew no motive why Yellow Hair should save him from death.

Not knowing that Star Eyes had rescued the youth, and exacted a pledge from him not to let him, Flying Feather, die, if he could prevent it, he was therefore by far more skeptical about believing in the promise of the Boy Chief, than was Big Thunder.

He had fought most bravely and lost, and being a captive to his foes, he was determined to die bravely, and meet unflinchingly every torture that might be inflicted upon him.

He was young, ambitious; loved, in the full intensity of his nature, the beautiful Star Eyes, and Indian though he was the future had looked bright to him.

But now all was lost in gloom; but die as he might his foes should know that he deserved the name he had won of chief.

Big Thunder on the contrary was old, and revenge upon his foes and love for his son, were all he cared for in life.

No torture could wring from him a cry of pain or a groan, and he felt that he could show Pawnee braves how to die.

But still he liked not such an end, and hoped that the tongue of the Boy Chief would be indeed proven not crooked by acts that did not belie his words.

In silence and outward calmness the two chiefs sat in the darkness, not a quiver showing their inward emotion, as the time flitted by and no call of the whippowill was heard.

In front of their tepee, as the flap fluttered in the breeze, they could see their Pawnee guards, standing like statues, and apparently listening to the sounds of voices that floated up from the village, for its denizens were not yet lost in slumber.

As the night grew older suddenly the two captive chiefs, in spite of their iron nerves, started, for afar off was heard the whippowill's call.

But not a sound escaped their lips, though their ears were strained to hear it again, and know if their senses had deceived them.

Again it was heard, and nearer.

"Ugh!" grunted Big Thunder.

"Ugh!" echoed Flying Feather, and these grunts meant as much as though they had spoken a dozen words.

In silence and still as bronze statues they listened.

Then for the third time came the call of the sad-noted night-bird.

It was nearer, too, to the tepee.

Still and outwardly calm they remained,

until suddenly a slight sound was heard at the back of the tepee.

What it was they did not know, but listening more attentively, they discovered it to be the noise made in cutting through cloth, for their tepee was an army tent, which the Pawnees had gotten possession of in the unaccountable way in which Indians get to be proprietors of many things, even to scalps.

Glancing at the rear wall of the large tent, the two captives suddenly saw a dark object relieved against the canvas, and their eagle-like eyes detected the head and shoulders of a human being thrust slowly in the aperture cut in the white wall.

Then it came further in until a whole form appeared.

Still no word was uttered, and the mysterious intruder grasped the hand of Big Thunder and drew him toward the opening, silently motioning to Flying feather to follow.

Hampered as they were with manacles and iron chains, it was no easy task; but soon, out through the opening went first the old chief, then the young one, and Yellow Hair, for he it was, cautiously followed, closing up the tear he had made in the canvas wall, so that it would not attract the sentinel's eyes, should he walk around the tepee.

The tent was on the side of a hill, and down this the Boy Chief led the captives until they reached a spot in the shadow of a clump of timber.

Here he halted, and drawing a piece of wire from his pocket, he quickly unfastened the manacles, and Big Thunder and Flying Feather wore no longer galling chains.

Motioning to them to bring their irons, he led the way into the dense timber, and never halted until he had gone half a mile.

"Here are good ponies and arms for the Big Thunder and Flying Feather.

"Let them mount and turn the heads of their horses toward the village of their people, and let them not linger, for, with the day the Pawnees will be on their trail."

"The Yellow Hair has made the heart of the Big Thunder glad, and his Sioux brother shall know that he saved the life of his father," said the old chief, with considerable feeling.

"Yes, the Flying Feather thanks the Yellow Hair, who is a Pawnee chief with the heart of a Sioux; but what of my braves?" remarked Flying Feather.

"The Yellow Hair promised not to save them.

"They are Sioux warriors and must meet their fate.

"Let the Big Thunder and Flying Feather carry their chains to the first deep stream and cast them in, that suspicion of aiding

their escape may not fall upon any one in the Pawnee village.

"Go and tell the Star Eyes and Little Thunder that the Yellow Hair sends them his heart, while to the White Snake say that the Boy Chief of the Pawnees will yet avenge his last cruel massacre of pale-faces and the people of the White Eagle's tribe.

"Go!"

There was no sentiment in either of the chiefs to cause them to wish to be tortured to death with their less fortunate warriors, and knowing that time was life with them, they hastily obeyed the bidding of the Boy Chief and rode away.

As the Boy Chief was retracing his way quietly and cautiously to his teepee, a tall form suddenly rose up before him.

Although taken unawares, the youth was ready to meet a foe in the twinkling of an eye, and said, quickly:

"I am Yellow Hair, the Boy Chief.

"Who is it that stands in my path?"

"The Yellow Hair should know Pateka,"

was the calm reply.

The Boy Chief knew well that Pateka was one of the young warriors who was jealous of his influence and reputation, and whom he felt had only waited an opportunity to be his pronounced foe.

What Pateka knew of where he had been and what doing he could not tell, and yet the bold manner of the Indian in confronting him as he did, gave him the idea that he had seen his apparent treachery to the Pawnees.

If this was the case he knew that he was lost, and he was determined that he would find out just what the red-skin did know.

So he said, calmly:

"The Yellow Hair does know Pateka, and he would ask him why he crawls like a snake in his path?"

"Does the Yellow Hair fear Pateka?" contemptuously asked the Indian.

"As he would a snake who would hide, and, unseen, strike at him in the dark, he fears Pateka," was the reply of Yellow Hair.

The Indian dropped his hand quickly upon his knife, and answered:

"Does the pale-face pappoose chief call Pateka a snake?"

Infuriated at the red-skin, and seeing that his intention seemed to be to force a quarrel with him, and even a combat, Yellow Hair said sternly:

"Yes, he is a snake with an evil spirit heart.

"He has been dogging the steps of Yellow Hair."

"And he has eyes," was the laconic reply of the Indian.

"He dare not tell what he has seen," said Eddie Burgess.

"Pateka will tell the chiefs in council all that his eyes saw, and he will speak straight when he tells them that the Yellow Hair trembles before Pateka."

This was too much for the Boy Chief, and quick as a flash he sprang upon the Indian, and ere he could prevent had him by the throat and his hand over his heart with the knife grasped firmly in it.

"Now what says Pateka?"

"Pateka will meet the Yellow Hair with his knife," said the Indian, anxious to shake off the gripe and begin a fight on fairer terms for him, than being taken by surprise as he was.

"I will meet him," said the Boy Chief.

"Then let Pateka go for Fawnfoot, his friend, and the Yellow Hair for one of his red brothers, that they may see which is the snake and the coward, the red-skin or the pale-face."

The Boy Chief at once saw through the intention of the cunning Indian and determined to thwart it.

Could he get witnesses to the combat, then he could make known what he had discovered, and even though he killed the red-skin, he would have his revenge in dying with the knowledge that his act that night would bring disgrace upon him.

"No, the Yellow Hair does not fear to fight alone.

"Let Pateka come."

"Where would the Yellow Hair go?"

"To yonder valley."

"Why not here?"

"Pateka is a fool, for the Yellow Hair is no bird to go into a trap, led by an Indian who hates him."

"Pateka will not go alone with the Yellow Hair!"

"Pateka shall, or the Yellow Hair will kill him now!"

The Indian knew that he was at the mercy of the Boy Chief, for he had his knife pressed over his heart, and his left hand grasped the red-skin's scalping-knife in his belt, so that he was wholly in his power.

Did he call out to alarm the village, then he knew he would be branded as a coward, no matter what fate would befall the Boy Chief.

Outwitted, out-Injun'd, and caught in his own trap, he had but one alternative, and moved away as the Boy Chief led him.

Reaching a quiet nook, and where the hills surrounding would break any sound of the combat, the Boy Chief said:

"Now let Pateka prepare to die, if he cannot kill the Yellow Hair."

He released his gripe on the Indian as he spoke, and at once Pateka seized his knife

and sprung upon him like a panther on his prey.

In the darkness the quick eye of the Boy Chief saw the savage thrust the Indian made at him, and parried the blade skillfully, while he pressed him hard.

Pateka had been considered a marvel in a knife encounter, and he believed he would be able to master the Boy Chief.

He had seen just enough of his acts that night to suspect he was treacherous, and could he prove it on him and conquer the famous young chief, he would become a great warrior himself.

But there had not been more than a dozen passes made with the knives when the red-skin knew he had more than his match to deal with.

But he entered with desperation into the fight, and tried all in his power to either disarm or kill his enemy.

Seeing that the Indian was in deadly earnest, the Boy Chief put out all his strength and skill, and running in on him, seized his knife hand with his left, bent him backward, and sent his own blade to the hilt in his breast.

Quickly the blow was repeated, and then he smothered the death-cry of the young brave with his hand, and held him in his powerful and firm gripe until he knew the end had come.

Then he dropped him upon the earth, and left him a corpse.

Then Yellow Hair regained, unseen, his tepee, and in the morning when the escape of the Sioux was discussed, and the body of Pateka was found, the most innocent-looking of all who heard the dire tidings was the Boy Chief.

Fearful of the escape of the rest of their prisoners, White Eagle, after ordering a large number of braves in pursuit of the fugitives, commanded that the Sioux be brought forth for torture, and the sickening scenes that followed, my pen cannot describe, kind reader.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BOY CHIEF'S RAID.

WHEN it was wholly in his power to return to his home, Eddie Burgess seemed in no great hurry to do so, but devoted himself thoroughly to the tribe which had adopted him as its chief, second only to White Eagle in power.

With the spirit and talent he had shown from earliest boyhood, he organized all the younger braves into a band, taught them that they could accomplish all that older warriors could, and even more, and drilled them into a discipline that was as strict as that of a regiment.

Having gotten his band complete, and to

number two hundred and fifty, he suddenly left the Pawnee village, giving out that he would be absent for a few weeks.

Then, straight to his old home he went, and who can picture the joyous welcome he received from those who loved him so devotedly, and who had long believed him dead.

"Brother Charlie?" was almost his first question.

All known of him was that a white boy was said to be living in a village of the Dog Soldier Sioux, with other captives, and it was believed and hoped that it was Charlie, as a scout had seen him since the massacre of the Babbitt family, but could tell nothing as to the fate of Eddie to them who so anxiously sought for news.

"I too believe it is Charlie, and I have of late been devoting my energies to one purpose, and that is, to make a raid into the Indian country with a band of trusty braves at my back, and rescue Charlie or die," said the young chief, firmly.

In vain did those who loved him try to dissuade him from his purpose, for he was determined, and, after a short stay at home he returned to the Pawnee village.

To the delight of his faithful band of young braves he led them to the settlement, where each one was equipped with a repeating rifle, revolvers and knife, and then returning to their village they began the work of drilling, until they became proficient in the use of the firearms.

At last the Boy Chief seemed satisfied with his band of braves, and one night they mysteriously left camp, going none knew whither outside of the faithful few.

Splendidly mounted and armed, the Boy Chief, with his fearless three hundred, seemed to dread no danger, and straight into the country of the hostile Sioux he went.

One night, when within a few miles of the village of the Dog Soldier Sioux, whom he sought, and while resting preparatory to attacking the camp at dawn, he was startled by seeing a Pawnee brave approach, accompanied by a tall, fine-looking young man who, though clad as an Indian, was certainly a pale-face.

One look of the two into each other's faces, and they sprang forward and grasped hands, while two names were spoken with intense feeling.

"Eddie!"

"Charlie!"

For some moments neither spoke, and then one said:

"You the chief of this Pawnee band?"

"Yes, Charlie, and you?"

"Oh! I have been a captive to the Sioux since we parted, and only this night escaped.

"I saw your camp, and approaching heard the Pawnee tongue, and knew I was safe, so called out to your Indian sentinel in his own tongue, and he led me to his chief, whom I find to be my brother.

"Oh, Eddiel! what have we not gone through since that fearful night of massacre."

Then the Boy Chief told his strange story to his brother, and midnight having come round the Pawnees moved on to attack the Sioux village, Charlie acting as guide.

At break of day they dashed in upon their foes, and the surprise was complete, and the work of death equally so, for the Pawnees wreaked a fearful revenge for many past offenses which they had suffered at the hands of their foes.

In all this raid the daring of the Boy Chief won for him the greatest admiration from his own braves, and his skill as a commander rendered him an object of hatred and terror to his foes.

In the charge, which the Boy Chief led in person, he saw a horseman suddenly dismount near a wigwam, seize a muffled form in his arms, and bounding back upon his mustang dash away at full speed.

There was something familiar to the Boy Chief, in the general appearance of the Indian, and after pressing on hard to get a better look at him, he cried aloud:

"It is the White Snake, and now comes my turn for revenge, and the settlement of debts outstanding between us."

CHAPTER XXVI.

TRAILING A SNAKE.

THE horseman in advance was not very long in discovering that he was pursued, and that he recognized his pursuer seemed evident from the manner in which he urged his horse on, lashing him furiously and cruelly at every bound, and keeping his spurred heels pressed continually against his flanks.

Calling a warrior to him, the Boy Chief bade him ride by his side while he gave him directions what to do, and also sent word to his brother Charlie that he had gone off on the trail of their bitterest foe.

Then, having observed the direction taken by White Snake, Yellow Hair dashed on in hot chase.

To his joy he saw that his horse was making splendid time, and it was not very long before White Snake also made this discovery, for he once more pressed his horse most cruelly.

That the animal was tired was very evident, and yet he did all in his power for his master, in spite of his carrying a double load.

"What can that villain have there, that

he will not drop it to save himself for ~~extra~~ out the extra load, his horse could ~~scarcely~~ hold his own with mine, and, at any rate, could lead me further away from my braves than I care to go."

For half a mile the Boy Chief then rode in silence, his piercing eyes fastened upon what the White Snake carried before him.

"Yes," he said, as though at last convinced, "I am sure that is a human being he carries.

"It is a young girl, of course, and yet, whoever it be, I am the more anxious to bring that wretch to bay."

The chase now was continued more hotly, as soon as the Boy Chief was assured that he was striving for a life to save from the fiend in human shape he knew so well.

Seeing that his pursuer was gaining, the White Snake drew his knife from his belt and drove it again into the back of his horse, sometimes forcing it an inch in depth.

Maddened with pain the noble animal did increase his speed, and held the vantage thus gained for a short while over the Boy Chief's horse.

But he had done his best, and this was only a dying effort, for the beast staggered fearfully, stumbled, and fell.

White Snake, as nimble as a panther, caught on his feet and tried to save the one he carried in his arms from the shock of the fall.

But the weight was too great for him and bore him flat on his face, and, before he could rise to his feet, he felt the muzzle of a revolver to his ear, and heard the words in the well-known voice of Yellow Hair:

"Surrender! and surrender quick, or I'll pull trigger."

CHAPTER XXVII.

TAKING THE CHANCES.

IN spite of the warning words, ere he replied the White Snake glanced around him.

He hoped for succor, trusted that some one of his band might be in sight, upon whom he could call for aid.

But by accident he had taken a course which had carried him away from all hope of succor from his fugitive band, should he need aid.

The land was rolling and he could not see far in any direction, and yet he did not, in spite of his great danger, yield, as the Boy Chief demanded.

"Speak quick, sir, or I fire."

"There is but one thing I can say."

"Then say it."

"What do you wish me to say?" and the White Snake's stubbornness told the Boy Chief that he was fighting for time, in hope

that some fugitive Sioux might come in that direction.

"Do you surrender?"

"What if I do not?"

"I will kill you."

"Then I surrender."

"Now, sir, who have you there?"

"I surrendered myself, not my booty," was the dogged reply.

"That appears to be human booty."

"It matters not to you what or who it is."

"It does, for I might save some poor being from death, or a fate even worse," said the Boy Chief, firmly.

"Oh, save me from him!"

Yellow Hair started, for it was evident the appeal was made to him, and it was in a voice strangely sweet, in spite of the trembling and fear in the tones.

"I will save you," he said firmly.

But, as he spoke he sprang backward, and just avoided the sudden spring of the White Snake.

Confident that he had seized a moment when he had the Boy Chief in his power, and from being off his guard, through the appeal to him for succor, he had suddenly whipped out a knife from his bosom and made the spring.

But Yellow Hair, under all circumstances, had learned ever to be on his guard, and he was quick enough to prevent the keen knife from descending into his heart.

And moreover he was not idle, for as he sprang backward he drew his revolver and White Snake was again covered by the threatening muzzle.

The renegade had pistols in his belt, but he had emptied them in the fight, and they were next to useless now.

"White Snake, this will not do, and I will end the affair by killing you as I would a dog," said the Boy Chief sternly, and his revolver again covered the heart of the renegade.

Whether White Snake understood the character of the boy well enough to know he would not shoot him down in cold blood, or not, is hard to tell, but he said earnestly:

"No, it is not in you, Yellow Hair, to kill an unarmed man."

"You have your knife."

"And you your revolvers."

"True, that does not leave us on an even footing."

"I knew you would feel the justice of that, Yellow Hair."

"But I have sworn to kill you, or be killed, White Snake, so I will place you on an equal footing with me, and take the chances."

"What chances?"

"Whether you kill me or not."

"They'll be in my favor."

"I'll risk them—there, take your stand by that pistol," and the Boy Chief tossed the pistol off some dozen paces.

"Now, I'll stand here, and, at a word we will stoop, raise our revolvers from the ground and begin firing, and one of us must die, as you know."

White Snake would have dodged this alternative; but he saw the youth would stand no more trifling, and yielded to the terms.

He sought to try trickery, but the hawk eyes of Yellow Hair were watching him too close, and he walked to the spot where lay the revolver.

The two stood upright with the revolvers lying at their feet and their eyes fixed upon each other.

"Now!"

The word broke from the lips of the Boy Chief, and quickly the two stooped, seized their respective weapons, and one shot followed the other quickly.

But the first weapon to flash was held in the hand of the Boy Chief, and it sped true, and cut through the broad breast of the renegade into his heart.

For a moment he stood like a statue of stone, gazing at the youth, and then he fell dead in his tracks.

But the Boy Chief had also been hit, though the wound was slight, having cut through the flesh on his left shoulder.

"He meant it well," muttered the boy, and then he turned to the serape lying some paces distant, and which he knew held a human form, for from thence had come the voice begging to him for safety.

To his surprise he found a lovely face gazing into his own, and saw that it was a maiden of scarce sixteen, with sunny hair and sky-blue eyes, though her face was wan and white.

Her hands and feet were bound, and the blanket wrapped around her form held her securely.

"Who are you?" asked the youth in his frank way.

"My home is far from here, and I was the captive of that man, who intended making my father pay a heavy ransom for me.

"But you have saved me, so please tell me your name that I may pray for you."

"I am called Yellow Hair, the Boy Chief of the Pawnees."

"Your name suits you, and I have heard of you; but you are not an Indian, of course?"

"Oh, no; not by birth; but I will tell you all about it as we ride back to join my braves, which I will do as soon as I have buried that wretch."

The Boy Chief, so thought the young girl,

was an adept at grave-making, for it took him a very short time to place the White Snake beneath the ground.

Then, placing the maiden on his horse, he mounted the tired pony of the White Snake, and in an hour's time rejoined his warriors.

With his prisoner, and a score of released white captives, the Boy Chief set forth upon his return, the belts of his braves heavy with scalps, and, in killing Henry Bascomb, *alias* White Snake the Renegade, he felt that he had fully avenged the crimes committed by the daring outlaw against Mr. Babbitt and his family.

For a long time, wedded to a wild life, both the Boy Chief and his brother lived among the Pawnees, and though Eddie Burgess has traveled extensively over the United States, and has a ranch in Nebraska, whenever any of his old band of braves meet him, they hail him as Yellow Hair, the Boy Chief.*

* The Boy Chief, with several of his Indians, traveled with Buffalo Bill in two of his dramatic tours.
—THE AUTHOR.

THE END.

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